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[WHERE AND OH! WHERE?]

THE GIPSY PEER; A SLAVE OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

CHAPTER XIV.

The green-eyed monster Jealousy
So nerved her heart that all its passions
Swelled into liquid fiery words,
That scorched her rival as with flame.

In Sir Horace Walpole, of cynical memory had but added to his world-known epigram "Every man has his price" the equally true assertion "Every man has his secret," he would have doubled his claims to immortality as a shrewd observer of human weakness and human follies.

If the reader will at this point of our drama consider for one moment the various dramatis personæ he will see that not only has each his or her secret, but that the secret so closely concealed within the heart is the motive for their whole actions and the key-stone of their existence.

A man's secret may sometimes bring him pleasure, but how often is it not rather fraught with pain?

To the gipsy chief what could his secret love for and adoration of the high-born daughter of Earls court bring him but daily discontent and fruitless longing? But that his eyes were fixed on the bright particular star his soul thirsted for he might have found a jewel at his feet little less brilliant and beautiful than the heaven-bound constellation.

Alas, how often we strain our aching eyes and stretch forth our trembling hands to the unattainable while that which would have secured our happiness, but for the ambitious dream, lies within our reach, in its turn imploring our eyes to look down upon and our hands to grasp it.

Side by side, apart from their position, stood, as equals in beauty and purity, Florence the heiress of Earls court, and Lurli the Zingari. What could be more fitting than that the queen daughter should be the queen wife, and that the stalwart gipsy chief should bind in firmer bonds of loyalty and brotherly

love the tribe over which he governed by wedding the daughter of their old queen?

Had the caravans passed Marston Moor and dropped down to rest for awhile on some bleak heath a score of miles beyond, the thing might have come to pass. But, alas, for the proper fitness of things, circumstances rule it that the tired sons of the woods shall pitch their tents within eyesight of Earls court tenants, that the young king shall fall beneath the imperious glance of Lady Florence, and that Lurli's bright love dream shall be shattered and dissolve as a soap bubble which a child blows forth upon the wind.

Some kinds of love are strengthened and intensified by pain; Lurli, though enduring an agony indescribable born of Tazoni's delirious raving, hid her anguish as stoically as the Spartan boy concealed the fox which was gnawing his breast beneath his cloak, and watched the sick man as a mother watches and tends her child.

Thus it happened that Tazoni's first return of consciousness rested upon her dark, patient face, and as a reward for her love and care her ears were the first to catch his rational words.

"Lurli," he said, raising himself upon his elbow and looking round the tent. "What's the time, and why am I here?"

Then he glanced at his arm and remembered all. "I see," he said, with a smile that contained more of true gratitude than a volume of choice speeches. "The arm has been bad, I have been ill, and you—as usual—are my ministering angel."

Her face flushed, but she softly drew away the hand which in his gratitude he had clasped between his own.

"I am not an angel, Tazoni," she said, "and I have done nothing save watch these sleep; no one could do more."

He looked around wearily. "Or thou wouldst have done it," he said. Then he looked at her face earnestly. "Thou lookest pale, sister mine," he said, gravely, "thou hast made thyself ill!"

"I am not ill," she said, hurriedly. "Indeed, I am quite well. But thou must lie down. Zillah said I was not to let thee rise. Come, Tazoni, if thou lovest me, be still."

He smiled at her eagerness and laid down again. "Tis to please thee, little one," he said, with a sigh. "Thou knowest how irksome idleness is to me; and I feel quite well enough to play the man again."

"Not yet, not yet," she interrupted, eagerly. "Thou must wait a week."

"That is impossible," he said, decisively. "There is work to be done, and—"

Seeing that he hesitated, the girl, averting her gaze, said, softly:

"Are we going to leave the moor then?"

He started slightly and threw back the hair from his forehead with an impatient gesture.

"Leave the moor?" he repeated. "Dost thou think we have been here too long?"

"No, no," she replied, quickly. "Why should I think so? 'Tis true we have stayed here longer than we have elsewhere, but as long as thou wilt—"

"That is not it," he said, in a quiet voice. "If the men are tired of the place—and it is their nature to rove—"

"And thine too; thou art a gipsy, Tazoni."

"Ours, I meant to say," he corrected himself, with a slight flush. "It is our nature to love change, and if they wish to move on we will go; ay, this day should they wish it."

"No, not to-day; it's impossible," she said, earnestly. "I know not if the men wish to stay or go. Why should they not be satisfied? There is plenty of work and food and money."

"Ay," he said, with a clearer brow. "If they are contented, we will stay a little while—that is, if thou wilt, my little queen."

"Nay, it is not for me to say," she said, softly. "But I will not have thee talk, Tazoni. Thou must rest; sleep, I mean."

"I can't sleep for ever," said Tazoni, with his low, musical laugh; "and if those are the church bells, I have been sleeping for two days."

"A sleep—that did thee no good," she murmured, smoothing the folded horse-rug, which served for a pillow, and holding out a tin-mug of some cooling drink.

"Sleep!" he muttered. "To dream! 'height!' and, wetting his lips with the liquid, he closed his eyes.

Lurli sat with drooped head, her eyes fixed upon the waving woods that rose like green clouds towards the sky.

Presently, when she thought him asleep, he started up again, and, in a tone excited and eager, exclaimed:

"Lurli, I had forgotten her horse."

"Her's?" repeated the girl, significantly.

"Lady Florence's, I mean," he explained, with slight embarrassment. "I must get up at once and see to it. It should have been sent home days ago."

"It has not been neglected," she said, almost coldly. "I sent a message to the Lady of Earls-court, saying—"

"Not that I was ill?" he broke in, silently.

Lurli shook her head.

"No. What harm if I had done so? No, I sent word that the horse would be sent home in a day or two; that that was all."

"She will think I'm rude, neglectful, insolent!" he muttered, biting his lip anxiously. "And what message sent she back, Lurli?"

"What message should the Lady of Earls-court send Lurli, the gipsy?" replied Lurli, with answering cheerfulness. "Her ladyship's gown said that the horse might be sent."

"And that would?" said Lurli, with another sigh.

"All!" answered Lurli, her bitterness of heart rising till it almost choked her voice. "What message should the Lady of Earls-court send Lurli, the gipsy?"

The bitter, coldly serene sentence seemed to hammer like the falling of a clock, and drove a sleep away.

Turning on his side, he groped with his hand in the corner of the tent.

"What a selfish feeling for!" said Lurli.

"A book," he said; "I cannot read doing nothing. Give me the book with the brown cover and the golden speckles. It'll take a turn at 'Don Quixote,' if I must believe like a lame dog."

The girl looked over the book carefully, then shook her head.

"Not there!" he said. "It must be lying there all."

She brought them all—a small pile—and he turned them over with the quick impatience of a strong sick man, but the Don Quixote was missing.

"Let me think," he muttered, pressing his hand to his forehead.

Then he remembered, and uttered an exclamation which was almost one of alarm.

"Lurli, that book must be found! Must, I say! It is necessary, imperatively necessary! Not a soul must see that book! Where did I have it last? Oh, I remember, in the woods by the waterfall. Send one of the men. Here, Colin," and, forgetting everything in the excitement, he shouted to Colin, who was lying on the grass within hearing, and who rose with the greatest alacrity at the sound of his master's voice.

"Colin, I have lost a book, a small one like this," and he held one up as a specimen. "It lies in the woods near the felled tree by the waterfall. Will you get it?"

"Ay," said Colin. "A book?" He scratched his head, muttering as he hurried off, "Now, if it had been a horse or a donkey, the matter 'ud be easy. But who's to trace a book without scent or hoof?"

He made the endeavour, however, and, of course, as the lost book was locked up in Lady Florence's private bureau, returned to report his failure.

Tazoni groaned inwardly. Every lover thinks his secret so important a one that all who come in contact with him must be spies on the search for it, and he imagined that his verses so thinly disguised the real object of his love that any one who, picking it up, and knowing Lady Florence, must at once have concluded that she was the star he had dared to write of.

"You are sure you left no spot unsearched?" he asked, anxiously.

"Not a foot," replied Colin, with emphasis.

And obliged to appear content with the answer, though he was far from feeling so, Tazoni sank back and lapsed into silence.

That evening the Earls-court party had gone in a body to the little church in the hollow—the ladies occupying the open carriages, and the gentlemen walking over.

It was a beautiful sunset, and the party stopped at the edge of the common to admire it.

"The gipsy encampment has not gone yet," said Lady Dartegale.

"No, how pretty it looks resting amongst the trees," exclaimed Miss Slade.

"How I should like to be a gipsy," sighed a young dame of eighteen, who was making her debut under the auspices of her aunt, Lady Marigold.

"I am afraid you would miss your lady's-maid and wardrobe, my dear Lily," laughed Lady Marigold. "Besides, all gipsy women are old."

"And wear red handkerchiefs round their heads, which would be most unbecoming to you, my dear Lily," added Miss Slade, with an engaging smile.

"Not all," said Florence, so quietly that Lady Dartegale looked at her in surprise, the tone was so grave and earnest.

"How do you know, my dear?" she said, with a smile.

To her increased surprise Florence's pale, proud face flushed slightly.

"One must have been young to be old," she replied.

"Yes, but you never see a young gipsy," said Miss Slade, another a gaze to denote her indifference to such matters.

"I suppose they keep themselves up in a sort of nunneries."

"In one of those queer-looking carts perhaps," suggested the young girl Lily. "Perhaps there is some in that funny little tent! Lady Dartegale, I should like to see the encampment close."

"You could do that, my dear," replied the kind-hearted Florence, "it would be a pitying and imprudent to intrude upon them."

"Who never prays or thinks of anything," added Florence, more to herself than to the others.

Miss Slade looked at her and burst into a laugh.

"Really, Florence," she said, leaning back and something the folds of her extensive blue mantle.

"You are quite the champion, I hope you will in them will not meet with betrayal. Remember they have a most potent power of mischief yet!"

Florence smiled.

"Dartegale is in the cart," she said, "I can see it through the trees."

"Oh, yes, you do, Florence," said Lily Marigold.

"Will it come from the tent? Or will it be in the cart?"

But Florence shook her head.

"That would give them trouble for no purpose. Besides, there are pigs and Sir Charles waiting for us."

Just as the carriage drove on, Florence, who was particularly good-natured, saw a gentleman walk slowly from the woods and approach the encampment.

When he was within a few yards of the tent, the figure of a young girl came to meet him, and with a lithic, graceful gesture warned him away.

The gentleman stood for a few minutes, evidently judging by his attitude, arguing awhile with the girl, then he drew still nearer and stretched out his hand as if about to grasp her arm.

Suddenly however Florence saw that the girl had caught sight of the carriage and had pointed to it, for with a quick movement the man turned his head, dropped her arm and came at a quick pace towards the Earls-court party.

"Who's that coming this way?" asked Lady Marigold.

"It looks like Lord Raymond Hursley," replied Lady Dartegale.

"It is he, mamma," said Florence, and a few minutes after, the horses having been pulled up to a walking pace, he had by taking a short cut across the common reached the side of the carriage.

"Good evening, ladies," he said, lifting his hat.

"Are you all quite well?"

"Yes," said Miss Slade with the others, and adding "But how very curious. Pray tell us what you have seen in that circle of mysteries."

"Eh?" said Lord Raymond, looking round with a stealthy glance beneath his thick eyelids, "do you mean among the gipsies?"

"Yes," said Miss Slade. "Did you not come from the caravans?"

"Oh, yes," he said, resting his hand on the carriage and walking with it as it slowly proceeded. "Oh, yes. I went, ah, to ask if you had passed, for I had heard up at the house that you had all gone to church."

"And whom did you see?"

Lord Raymond hesitated, then with the coolness of an habitual falsifier, replied:

"Oh, an old woman, the usual sort, black as a coal and as dirty."

Florence's head was turned aside so that he could not see its expression, but she turned her hazel eyes upon him for a moment with a long, steady regard which he did not like.

"I was going up to the hall," he said, "it's rather slow at home to-day; Denville hasn't come back, you know, and he was to have come last night."

"Oh, was he?" said Miss Slade, who knew that

he was perfectly well, having had a letter to that effect. "I thought you did not expect him for a week or two."

Lord Raymond nodded.

"He's not very entertaining perhaps, but he's better than no one in the house. He's coming over to-morrow, so you will be able to talk about books again, Florence."

Florence inclined her head, but did not speak.

Lord Raymond flushed under her calm contempt and dropped his hand from the carriage.

"I'm keeping you at a crawl," he said, "don't wait for me."

"Oh, can't we make room?" said Miss Slade, in a hesitating murmur.

"No, thank you," he said, sulkily, "I'll catch up Lord Dartegale." And lifting his hat he walked on quickly.

"I think Lord Raymond does not look well," said Miss Marigold, with charming candour.

Lady Marigold smiled indulgently.

"Gentlemen are not flattered by such close attention, my dear," she said. "But certainly," she added, addressing Lady Dartegale, "Lord Hursley does not look so well as he did."

"He is pale to-night," remarked Lady Dartegale, glancing at Florence as she spoke. "I think he smokes too much; all gentlemen do now, I think. I can't understand it. They need not to in the old days."

"Oh, I don't think Lord Raymond smokes so much, does he, aunt?" said Miss Slade. "I never see him with a cigar in the morning."

Lady Dartegale sighed, and changed the subject by asking Florence to pass her shawl, and advising the rest of the ladies to do the same.

Lord Raymond stayed to dinner, but did not enter the meal by any brilliant conversation or witty remarks. He sat silently regarding the costumes of the ladies, and listening to the bright, sharp talk of the ladies and the literary lions, apparently absorbed in his own gloomy reflections, and watching with jealous eyes the attention which all paid to the daughter of the house.

Mr. and Mrs. Slade helped him to a more congenial state, for it was one of the rules to keep clear of him when the subject of his own family was introduced.

At last the dinner—a pleasant one for all but the staid peer and the scheming young lady—came to an end, and the ladies and gentlemen together passed into the drawing-room, it being the custom at Earls-court for the gentlemen to leave the table with the ladies on Sundays.

The gentlemen soon grouped together to discuss the coming first of September and to enter into a general review of the new breach-leader, and Lord Raymond, for the first time during the evening, found himself able to talk upon a subject he understood.

Some of the ladies took up books and others compared notes on the latest expensive fashions, while a few drew round Miss Slade at the piano; where she had been placed by Lady Dartegale to play some fugues of Mozart.

Florence, being in no mood for fashions, and too familiar with the fugues, strolled to the window, and was soon lost in her own thoughts, the conversation that buzzed through the room mingling in her ears with the strident tones of the piano, and superinducing that dreamy state which Lady Dartegale defined as absence of mind.

In reality she was wondering why she had seen and heard nothing of Tazoni since the night of the picnic. That he had hurt himself or received any injury in his deed of heroism never for a moment struck her. The farm labourers and peasants for miles round Earls-court were accustomed to fly to the great hall when the slightest mishap befell them, and Florence, knowing nothing of the independent spirit which distinguished Tazoni's tribe, not unnaturally concluded that had anything happened to her chief some of the gipsies would have applied to her father for assistance. She had also met Dr. Walton the preceding evening, and he had said nothing of a patient in the encampment, which he most assuredly would have done had he possessed one, being the greatest gossip in the place.

It is difficult to imagine in a review of any description in a room full of talking people and a lady at your elbow hard at Mozart's fugues.

Florence looked round with a slight wonder if either the musical or gossiping groups would miss her, then, deciding to pass it, she softly unlocked the great window and passed on to the terrace.

Tazoni had, after Colin's return from his unsuccessful search, fallen asleep and slept all day. For

such a constitution as his sleep was the one thing needful to repair the mischief occasioned by over exertion and his broken limb.

The gipsy doctors had told Lurli this, and so the girl sat beside him motionless as a statue and let him sleep. She made a pretence of eating some dinner and of drinking the cup of hot tea which Martha brought her, but it was pretence only, and the day passed with nothing to break the monotony of her sad thoughts save the appearance of Lord Raymond, whom she had once more driven from the camp.

All day, in sad harmony with the church bells, one word had rung in her ears, "Florence!" the name of the high-born lady who lived at the great house; and then thinking of her hour after hour the gipsy girl felt an irresistible longing to see the dainty, fair-faced aristocrat who had cast a spell over Tazoni, whom she loved with more than a sister's love.

Was this great lady so wondrously beautiful? Was there a mystic charm in her eyes, her voice, her touch? What mysterious power did she possess that Tazoni, whose wisdom was a byword amongst his race, should fall beneath the charm like one stricken by sorcery?

The gipsy girl's small brown hands clasped themselves with passionate bitterness. Oh! that they had never come within sight of the fatal house and the dire enchantress. She could see, when she rose to her feet, the turret of the hall rising proudly above the beeches, and in that house was the woman who had stolen Tazoni's heart, doubtless to tread it beneath her scornful feet.

She longed to see this high-born beauty, and why should she not? A cat might look at a king, surely one woman might look at another.

Lights were blazing from the great windows, the ladies dressed in their silks and satins could be seen by any one creeping quietly along the dark shadows of the terrace.

From among that group, though it consisted of a thousand, Lurli felt that she could pick out the woman whom Tazoni loved. Borne along by the passionate longing, as a straw is carried by the current, she flung a silken scarf, which had been a present of Tazoni's, over her head, bent over him to ascertain if he still slept, then, with the light, noiseless step of a panther, passed quickly across the moor.

When she reached the terrace the sound of the music and the high-bred voices struck her with an unpleasant chill. She would go back. Why should she give herself fruitless pain by looking on the face which he loved?

For an instant she half-turned—but only for an instant; the next she ran up one of the flights of steps and glided into the shadow of the laurels.

Scarcely had she done so than Florence unfastened the window and stepped out.

The brilliant light from the many candelabras pouring through the window fell upon her face and revealed it in all its pale proud beauty to the breathless gaze of the gipsy girl. Looking with all her heart she understood the charm which had thrown its glamour over Tazoni.

With a cry of despair that was a confession of weakness she pressed her hand to her bosom, and scarcely knowing what she did sprang on to the terrace a few feet in front of Florence.

Proud of the immovability which is a type of her class, the earl's daughter, whatever she might have felt, showed no trace of fear. With a look of ineffable calmness and surprise she regarded the gipsy girl for a moment in silence, then, in low, measured tones, she said:

"What are you doing here, my girl?"

Lurli, still staring at her, seemed struck dumb.

"Did you hear me?" said Florence. "Who are you, and what are you hiding here for?"

"Hiding?" breathed Lurli, proudly.

"Yes," said Lady Florence; "you were watching for some one; for whom?"

Her calm beauty and even tones seemed to have set the gipsy girl's blood on fire.

Dropping her hand from her bosom, and clenching it at her side, she said:

"You are right; I was watching; I was watching, and I came to see—then."

"Me?" said Florence, quietly.

"Yes, thou. I came to see for myself the beauty with which, sorceress as thou art, thou bewitchest men; thou art beautiful and scornful as a queen, but thou art a witch, and I would not have thy beauty if thou couldst give it me. Thou has ruined the truest man ever seen on earth. Al, curl thy lip, fair lady; thou canst not deceive me, thou knowest upon whom thy charms fall. Thou hast no pity. Hast thou not enough slaves in thy palace yonder but thou must beguile with thy fair face and queenly smile a poor gipsy? Those gentlemen yonder are fair sport for thy arts, lady, not he who, though worth a

hundred of them all, thou dost beguile but to scorn. Be content, proud lady, with the harm thou hast already done; leave him to those who love him with his broken limb and perchance broken heart. We are gipsies and not worth a curl of thy scornful lip; we ask thee but to leave us alone, as we, so Heaven be my witness, have left thee."

Breathless, panting, she paused, overpowered by her own vehemence.

Florence, who had listened to the confused, passionate, yet roughly eloquent appeal with feelings which she herself could not have distinctly described, regarded her with a look as fixed as Lurli's own.

At last she said, in a voice so low that the gipsy could scarcely catch it:

"Tell me the name of him whom you say I have injured."

"Nay," said Lurli, throwing back her head, while her face crimsoned; "my lips shall not speak his name to thy ears; he whom thou hast wronged lies ill and helpless beyond thy reach; spare thy pity, proud lady, he is with those who know how to care for, and guard him; meet thy smiles and fair, soft words to thy slaves yonder, and leave the gipsy as thou findest him—free!"

Then before Florence could recover from the passionate outburst, which was more violent in its pride and abandon than the first, the girl leapt towards the steps and disappeared in the darkness.

Florence, with a throbbing heart and a confused thrill half of pleasure, half of pain, was about to obey her first impulse and follow her, but before she had gained the first step the drawing-room window was thrown open and Lord Raymond's voice came floating thickly out to her:

"Are you there, Florence? Perhaps you can spare a moment to say good night; I'm going home."

CHAPTER XV.

But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven has
joined
Great issues, good or bad for humankind
Is happy as a lover. *Wordsworth.*

THAT night was a sleepless one for Florence. The thin veil of self-deception in which she had so carefully shrouded her heart had been rudely torn asunder. In the darkness and stillness of the night the truth came to her: she was loved by the strange being she had met in the woods, and she loved in return.

She, "the daughter of a hundred earls," loved a gipsy.

Having thus, with crimson face, admitted the truth in all its glaring abruptness, she looked around for some ray of escape.

That anything could come of such misplaced love was impossible. She could not step from her place and give her hand where she had given her heart, though the mighty clan had smilingly permitted it.

Florence was proud of her high blood, and held dear all the traditions of her race.

No, she had wasted her first life's sweetness upon the desert air, and acknowledging that fully yet bitterly, she asked herself what course she must pursue.

There was only one, and that the gipsy girl had plainly pointed out. For the future she must avoid the gipsy, she must never see his handsome face or hear his deep, musical voice again.

His welfare, her own high honour demanded it; for the future their lives, like two rivers, must run down to the sea of death far apart, or perhaps side by side, but never touching.

She rose pale, languid and dispirited, and the first words that met her in the breakfast room came from Miss Slade, who, kissing her affectionately, said:

"My dear Florence, are you not delighted? Mr. Denville has returned! I saw him riding up the road towards Northcliffe. I daresay all his business in London has been to get you some new books, and we shall have him here in an hour or two as languidly enthusiastic as ever."

Miss Slade was quite correct; she had seen Horace Denville riding towards Northcliffe, and she had, though she not seen fit to mention it, a short conversation with him.

"Well, Milly," he said, as she came forward, concealed by a high hedge from any one walking in the path. "You got my letter, I see; and is all safe and sound at Earls Court?"

"Yes," said Miss Slade, "thanks to me; but why did you not come back before? Is it safe to play fast and loose with so great a fish?"

"Perhaps not," he replied, "but it could not be helped. The Jews were down upon me, and it took all my eloquence to persuade them that their money was safe and that there really was a chance of my landing a fish this time on the strength of my marriage with your adorable cousin. I have actually

got a thousand from them, half of which, my dear Milly, need I say, is at your service."

Miss Slade did not decline the offer, but she smiled rather incredulously.

"Do you feel as confident as you profess?" she said, in a low voice.

"Do you mean," he said, "shall I marry Lady Florence? Yes, I shall," and through the languid smile there flashed a gleam of firm determination which silenced his accomplice.

"Well," she said, looking down, "you are old enough to play your own game, Horace, but mind this time you win. You're going up to the hall?"

"Yes," he said, gathering up the reins. "By the way, that young wolf cub is prettily netted; the Jews have got him hard and fast. Levi Jacobs told me that the young cub had promised to pay up in a month. 'Do you know how he means to do it?'"

Miss Slade shook her head.

"Well," he said, as he trotted off, "make him pay them before he's married, Milly, then he'll only have to pay yours."

With his careless insouciant smile Mr. Denville arrived at the hall, and sauntered into the breakfast room as if his absence from it had only been that of an hour.

Lord Raymond was positively glad to see him, and Mr. Denville, while noticing it, was considerably struck by the change which a few days had wrought in the heir to Northcliffe. He seemed to have aged, was paler, and more morose and heavy-eyed.

Before Mr. Denville had half-finished his breakfast his keen eyes had noticed the young lord start three times at some slight, unimportant noise, and that he seemed to be keeping a furtive watch upon the window and door as if he expected some one to enter or pass.

After detailing the news, marriages, ladies' gossip for Lady Northcliffe, club notes and politics for Lord William, and scraps of racing intelligence for Lord Raymond, he and Lord Raymond sauntered out for a stroll, taking Earls Court in their way. Their visit could not have been for Mr. Denville better timed. Florence welcomed his advent as a diversion from her thoughts, and plunged into the latest literary intelligence and new books with avidity.

Mr. Denville was known to most if not all the guests at Earls Court, and soon found an opportunity of showing Florence he was a man of some consequence. As a man of fashion he was sought after by the artists, as a man of the world he was studied by the authors, and with them all he maintained that air of calm supremacy which at once gave him a high position with the ladies.

Before he had taken his departure a picnic for the morrow had been arranged; on the day following that Lord Dartle gave a great dinner, and in the evening Mr. Denville, with great finesse, arranged another outdoor party.

Day followed day. At each gathering he managed to ingratiate himself with Florence, who, thoroughly believing that his affections were placed elsewhere, felt no fear in their intercourse, and could not but be pleased by his attention. At the same time Miss Slade lost no opportunity of creeping into the confidence of Lord Raymond.

He began to look for her smiles and soft speeches and to miss both them and her if she was not by his side. Still he professed a certain proprietorship in Florence, and Lady Dartle, thoroughly deceived, felt convinced that he was reforming in his habits with a view to making Florence his wife. The first week of September passed in a whirl of gaiety. One morning, two days before the great ball, which the whole county was looking forward to, Mr. Denville walked over to Earls Court and found Miss Slade in the drawing-room alone.

In a quick, hurried whisper he said:

"I want to get her to the chapel; you and the cub must come, but must leave us there—better, lose us in the woods; if we are missed look for us in every direction but that; to-day I play my great card, wish me luck."

Miss Slade had only time to nod with quick sympathy before Florence entered.

"Florence dear," she exclaimed, "isn't it provoking? Here is Mr. Denville come over to ask us to go with him to the woods. I have told him that we are having a quiet afternoon to ourselves, but he will not take his answer."

"Oh, I cannot," said Mr. Denville, "it would be too great a disappointment, Lady Florence. Raymond is coming along, looking forward to a jolly stroll, and it will cut him up fearfully. Pray come."

Florence hesitated a moment, then, always good-natured, said:

"I shall be glad to come if Emilia will go."

"Oh, yes, I'll go," said Miss Slade.

And in a few minutes they started, meeting Raymond at the park gate.

Mr. Denville never seemed in better spirits. Flo-

rence felt her bitter mood broken down and dispelled by his easy, graceful gaiety.

They walked some distance in an opposite direction to the chapel, when suddenly Miss Slade proposed that they should, for amusement, start off on a journey of exploration and meet at a given point. Florence acquiesced, thinking that Raymond and Horace Denville were to go by themselves, but before she was almost aware of it Raymond and Miss Slade had started off, and she found herself accompanying Mr. Denville.

They walked for some few minutes, laughing, when he pulled up and said:

"Rather a waste of time this, rambling through the undergrowth. Don't you think we had better make straight for the chapel? If you'll wait one moment I'll run back and tell Raymond to meet us there."

He was gone five minutes and returned laughing and out of breath.

The walk to the chapel was a beautiful one, and during the whole way he talked as only Horace Denville could talk. It was impossible not to enter into his various moods, were they grave or gay, and Florence could not but acknowledge the charm of his polished intellect.

At last they came upon the chapel.

"What a splendid ruin," he exclaimed, "and there sits old David like Father Time watching the crumbling stone."

As he spoke the old man rose from his seat at the door and drew forth the key of the turret.

"He thinks we want to ascend the tower," said Florence, smiling at the old man.

"And why should we not?" said Horace Denville, gaily; "you promised to play cicorone remember."

"And so I will," said Florence, and she followed David up the narrow stairs.

The old man unlocked the iron gate and Mr. Denville followed Florence on to the battlement.

As he did so he motioned to David, unseen by Florence, that he might go, and the old man, touching his hat, descended the stairs, leaving the gate, which closed with a spring, wide open.

Florence pointed out the various points of interest or beauty in the view, and Horace Denville listened with a rapt attention.

When she came to Earls Court, which lay in the far distance, he said, in a low voice:

"Most beautiful of all, and yet, Lady Florence, I envy it one thing only."

"Yes?" said Florence, looking dreamily out upon the view, which was gradually becoming overcast by the shades of evening. "And what might that be?"

"Can you not guess?" he murmured, drawing near to her until his arm almost touched hers.

"No," said Florence, still unconscious and without looking at him.

"What else would I envy but the treasure which it contains—yourself?" he said, laying his hand on her arm.

Florence drew back pale and astounded.

With flashing eyes he seized her hands and bent towards her.

"Florence, I cannot deceive you, I cannot remain silent longer. I have remained silent too long. Florence, I love you. I have loved you since the first moment my eyes lit upon your beautiful face. How mad such a love as mine must be I felt conscious, and yet I could not stem its torrents, and, come what may, I lay it and myself at your feet. Have pity upon me, and say, bright ideal of my life, that you will be mine!"

He dropped on one knee as he spoke and grasped still tighter her cold, shivering hand.

Florence, her dark eyes fixed on him with a look almost of loathing, drew back as from a serpent.

"You have not deceived me, sir," she said, "but yourself. I do not wish for your love, nor will I have it. Rise, Mr. Denville, and leave me."

"No," he said, "it is impossible."

"Then I will go," she said. And snatching her hand from his grasp she hastened with trembling feet to the gate.

He sprang before her and swung the gate to. It closed with a sharp click.

"No," he said. "That also is impossible. The gate is locked."

For a moment Florence could not realize the whole of his perfidy. Then, when she realized her position she shrank back, horror-stricken.

"See," he cried, "to what desperate means my love drives me. Lady Florence, you are here alone with me, and I swear you shall not go until you have plighted your troth."

Florence looked round in speechless agony, then she burst into a hollow laugh.

"Villain! Your cunning wickedness has overreached yourself. You forget that my friends will be

here directly, are perhaps even now waiting below, and that a word from me will bring them up."

He smiled, and his smile alone struck cold to her heart.

"Not so, Florence, a desperate man, such as I am, guards against all possibilities. When I left you in the woods it was to tell your cousin that you had decided to spend the evening at Northcliffe. By this time they are at home, fully persuaded that you are with Lady Northcliffe."

"David?" breathed Florence.

"Has gone home on horseback while you were pointing out the view, I watched him disappear among the trees. I implore you, Florence, face the inevitable. You must, you shall be my wife, for it is impossible that you, so proud, so susceptible to the slightest breath of slander, can sacrifice your fair name and reputation. Both are gone if it is once known that you were alone with me in the desolate tower. Look your position in the face. Be my wife, for there is no help for it on earth."

"Then," said Florence, with a great cry, pointing one white finger to the sky, "I look for it in Heaven!"

She staggered, and Horace Denville sprang forward to catch her in his arm, but at that moment, while she shrank from him, Florence saw something rising above the battlement. It was a man's head. The next instant the ivy was burst asunder and a man leapt from the top of the battlement and hurried himself upon Horace Denville. It was as if Heaven had answered her cry.

"Tazoni!" burst from her lips, as Horace Denville, with an oath, rose from the shock and wrestled with the deliverer.

Face to face, breast to breast, the men awayed to and fro on the narrow footpath; the woman for whom they fought leaning against the moss-eaten stone with white face and clasped hands.

Strength and true love conquered. With a cry like a lion, Tazoni crushed the traitor upon the ground, then, with his grasp upon his throat, he turned to Florence, and, in a voice that was hoarse from his exertions, said:

"Fear not, lady, you are saved."

"Saved?" hissed Horace Denville, struggling to his feet and limping to the gate. "How will this ruffian's presence save your reputation? The gate is locked. My tale is prepared; I found you here alone with a gipsy!"

Florence stood white and shuddering.

Tazoni for a moment was staggered by this genius of villany.

"Ah!" hissed Horace Denville, grasping the gate and laughing sardonically, "you see there is no escape. Your low-born lover has but thickened the plot. Better lose your name with Horace Denville than a gipsy vagabond."

With a cry Tazoni sprang upon him and grasped him in his arms.

"Vile reptile!" he cried, "there is one escape, and that she takes," and he dragged him to the edge of the turret.

"What? What?" cried Horace Denville.

"What will I do?" said Tazoni, with a ringing laugh; "this, idiot! Fling us both over, and leave your would-be victim and her name untarnished."

Florence sprang forward and grasped Tazoni's arm.

"No, no," she cried, "it is death for both of you; your life shall not be sacrificed for mine."

"Stand back!" cried Tazoni, forcing her clasp from his arm with cold desperation; "nothing but this can save you, and it shall be done. His blood and mine be on his head!"

So saying, he leaped upon the edge of the turret and dragged Horace Denville shrieking after him. They awayed to and fro in the night air.

A fearful shriek rang from Florence's lips.

"Stop! stop!" screamed Horace Denville, and, with a frantic effort, he drew from his breast a key, and flung it upon the flat stone platform.

Tazoni sprang upon it, and rushed to the gate. The next moment it was open, and Florence was free.

"Go!" he said, hoarsely. "The women of my tribe are close by in the wood, they will take you safely home. You are saved."

Florence, half fainting, half delirious, took his outstretched hand and pressed it to her lips, then passed through the gateway on to the staircase.

(To be continued.)

From the 1st of September, and thenceforward, the postage of a newspaper not exceeding four ounces in weight, addressed to any of the following places, and intended for transmission by the mail via Southampton, was reduced from 2d. to 1d., viz.:—To the East Indies, Hong Kong, or any part of China, Japan, Ceylon, Straits Settlements, and Labuan; a farther rate of 1d. being chargeable for every additional four ounces, or fraction of four

ounces. This postage in all cases to be paid in advance, or the newspaper cannot be forwarded.

TURKEYS AND CATERPILLARS.—The fields of sugar beets near Sacramento, California, were recently saved from destruction by vast armies of caterpillars through the labours of a flock of 3,000 turkeys. The struggle was evenly balanced for a time; then success wavered, first one side gained, then the other; finally the turkeys triumphed, with the loss of one over-gorged victim, from whose crop were taken 1,600 of the caterpillars. The whole number consumed in the few days of the strife can be computed by those who love to figure up such problems.

A NEW DELICACY.—At a luncheon given recently at Brighton, by Sir J. Cordy Berrows, one of the Brighton Aquarium Company, to Mr. Somes, the chairman of the company, and other gentlemen, a number of delicacies were served for the first time in England, including an octopus, which was dished up cold, boiled and broiled. The company pronounced it excellent, comparing it with lobster and skate, though they found it rather tough, and thought it required beating, like a steak, to break the fibres and render it more tender. The octopus thus cooked and eaten was caught off the pier head.

THE SHOEMAKER.

THE shoemaker sat amid wax and leather,

With lap-stone over his knee,

Where, snug in his shop, he defied all weather,

Drawing his quarters and sole together,

A happy old man was he!

This happy old man was so wise and knowing,

The worth of his time he knew;

He bristled his ends, and he kept things going,

And felt to each moment a stitch was owing,

Until he got round the shoe.

Of every deed that his wax was sealing,

The closing was firm and fast,

The prick of his awl never caused a feeling

Of pain to the toe; and his skill in healing

Was perfect, and true to the last.

Whenever you gave him a foot to measure,

With gentle and skilful hand

He took his proportions with looks of pleasure,

As if you were giving the costliest treasure,

Or dubbing him lord of the land.

And many a one did he save from getting

A fever, or cold, or cough;

For many a foot did he save from wetting,

When, whether in water or snow 'twas setting,

His shoeing would keep them off.

When he had done with his making and

mending,

With hope and a peaceful breast,

Resigning his awl, as his thread was ending,

He passed from his bench to the grave descending,

As high as the king to his rest.

H. F. G.

A STURGEON, six feet long, thirty-eight inches girth and weighing 150 lbs., has been taken with a spear in Lake Monona, at Madison, Wisconsin. The spear had 100 feet of line, and with this the sturgeon towed a boat with two men backwards and forwards for an hour or two before it was landed.

ENGLISH sportsmen ought to have an eye to Norway; the accounts of the abundance of game read attractive enough to make a true son of the ramrod start off at once. Listen:—In 1855 the bears killed amounted to 212, the wolves to 232, the lynxes to 125, the gluttons to 72, and the eagles to 2,559! Between 700 and 800 mountain owls and about the same number of hawks are slain every year. Stags, elks, and reindeer are common, but beavers are almost extinct. The game-laws of Norway are extremely strict and severe. One of the greatest natural curiosities in Norway is the mischievous lemming, an animal of a brownish colour, about the size of our water-rat. These creatures do not appear year by year, but at intervals of three or four years. Their natural habitat is the mountains, from which they migrate when their numbers become too large for home subsistence. Their water passage is from east to west in a direct line, and they take boldly to broad rivers and large floods till they arrive on the shores of the Atlantic. Should they encounter a heavy storm they are drowned in myriads and float on the surface of the water. Many of them are supposed during their passage to be devoured by birds of prey. Their march is chiefly nocturnal, and they devour most of the corn or herbage in their route. "Formerly the Norwegians believed them to have fallen from the clouds, and so great was the mischief caused by them that they were solemnly exorcised by the priests, and a Lening Litany was appointed to be said with this object"—another instance of ancient Norse superstition.



[LAWRENCE IN DANGER.]

CAST ON THE WORLD.

CHAPTER IX.

Love looks not with eyes but with the mind,
And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blind.

Shakespeare.

"LAWRENCE, step in here for a moment," said Mr. Thornton; and Lawrence, equipped for travelling, followed his father into the library, where all the family edicts were issued and all the family secrets told. "Lawrence, Geraldine tells me you are going to Beechwood for three or four days."

"Why, yes," returned the son. "I received a letter from Lillian last night inviting me to come. I told you of it at the time, else my memory is very treacherous."

"It may be—I don't remember," said the father; "but Geraldine has given me a new idea about your going there, and it is for this I have called you in. Lawrence, do you love Lillian Veille?"

"Why do you ask me that question, when you know that I have always loved her?" was the reply, and Mr. Thornton continued:

"Yes, yes, but how do you love her—as a sister—as a cousin—or as one whom you intend to make your wife?"

"I have been taught to think of her as one who was to be my wife, and I have tried to follow my instructions."

"Sit down, sit down," said Mr. Thornton, for Lawrence had risen to his feet. "I have not finished yet. Lillian has been with us for years, and I, who have watched her carefully, know that in all the world there is not a purer, more innocent young girl. She is suited to you in every way. She has money—her family are among the first in the land, and, more than all, she is trained to believe that you would some day make her your bride."

"Please come to the point," interrupted Lawrence, consulting his watch. "What would you have me do?"

"I would have the matter settled while you are at Beechwood. She is eighteen now, you are twenty-three; I have made you my partner in business, and I would like to see Lillian mistress of my house. So arrange it at once, instead of spending your time trifling with that girl Mildred," and with this the whole secret was out, and Lawrence knew why he had been called into the library and subjected to that lecture.

Mildred Wilton was a formidable obstacle in the way of Lillian Veille's advancement. This the lynx-eyed Geraldine had divined, and, with her wits all sharpened, she guessed that not Lillian alone was taking the young man to Beechwood. So she

dropped a note of warning into the father's ear, and now, without the door, was listening to the conversation.

"I have never trifled with Mildred Wilton," said Lawrence, and his father rejoined, quickly:

"How then? Are you in earnest? Do you love her?"

"I am not bound to answer you that," returned Lawrence; "though I will say that in some respects I think her far superior to Lillian."

"Superior!" repeated the father, pacing up and down the room. "Your superior women do not always make their husbands the happiest. Listen to me, boy—I have been married twice. I surely ought to judge in those matters better than yourself. Your mother was a gentle, amiable creature, much like Lillian Veille. You inherit her disposition, though not her mind—thank Heaven, not her mind! I was happy with her, but she died, and then I married again—married one who was famed for her superior intellect quite as much as for the beauty of her person—and what was the result? She never gave me a word or a look different from what she would have given to an entire stranger. Indeed she seemed rather to avoid me, and, if I came near, she pretended always to be occupied with a book or with you. And yet I was proud of her, Lawrence—proud of my girlish bride, and when she died I shed bitter tears over her coffin."

Lawrence Thornton was older now than when he sat upon the river bank and told little Mildred Hawkins of his beautiful young step-mother. He was older by several years, and he knew why she had shrunk from his caresses—so he ventured at last to say:

"Sweet Mildred was young enough to be your daughter, and should never have been your wife."

"Twasn't that—it wasn't that," returned the father. "There was no compulsion used; she was too intellectual—too independent—too high-tempered, I tell you, and this other one is like her in everything."

"How do you account for that?" asked Lawrence, who had his own private theory with regard to Mildred's parentage.

"I don't account for it," said Mr. Thornton. "I only know she is not at all connected with the Wiltons. She is the child of some poor creature who will be claiming her one day. It would be vastly agreeable, wouldn't it? to see a ragged pauper, or maybe something worse, ringing at our door and claiming Mrs. Lawrence Thornton for her daughter. Lawrence, that of itself is a sufficient reason why you must not marry this Mildred, even if there were no Lillian, who has a prior claim."

"Father," said Lawrence, "you think to disgust me, but it cannot be done. I like Mildred Wilton. I admire her. I think her the most splendid creature I ever looked upon; and, were I a little clearer as to her family, Lillian's interest might perhaps be jeopardized."

"Thank Heaven, then, that her family is shrouded in mystery!" said Mr. Thornton, while Lawrence sat for a moment intently thinking.

Then, suddenly springing up and seizing his father's arm, he asked:

"Did you ever know for certain that the child of sister Helen died?"

"Know for certain? Yes. What put that idea into your head?" Mr. Thornton asked.

And Lawrence replied:

"The idea was not really in there, for I know it is not so, though it might have been, I daresay; for, if I remember right, no one save an old nurse was with Helen when she died, while even that miserable Hawley, her husband, was somewhere abroad."

"Yes," returned the father, "Hawley was away, and never, I think, came back to inquire after his wife or child, for he, too, died within the year."

"Then how do you know Mildred is not that child?" persisted Lawrence—not because he had the most remote belief that she was, but because he wished to see how differently his father would speak of her if there was the slightest possibility of her belonging to the Thornton line.

"I know she isn't," said the father. "I went to the house myself, and talked with Esther Bennett, the old woman who took care of Helen, and then of the child until it died. She was a weird-looking creature, but it was the truth she told. No, you can't impose that tale on me. This Mildred is not my grandchild."

"For which I fervently thank Heaven!" was Lawrence's response; and in these words the black-eyed Geraldine, watching by the door, read how dear to the young man was Mildred Wilton, and how the finding her his sister's child would be worse to him than death itself.

"He shall not win her though," she muttered, between her glittering teeth, "if I can prevent it, and I think I can. That last idea is a splendid one, and I'll jot it down in my book of memory for future use, if need be."

Geraldine Veille was a cold-hearted, unprincipled woman, whose early affections had been blighted, and now at thirty-one she was a treacherous, intriguing creature, void of heart or soul, except where Lillian was concerned. In all the world there was nothing one-half so dear to the proud woman as her young half-sister, and, as some fierce tigress keeps guard over its only remaining offspring, so

she watched with jealous eye to see that nothing harmed her Lillian. For Mildred Wilton she had conceived a violent aversion, because she knew that one of Lawrence Thornton's temperaments could not fail to be more or less influenced by glowing beauty and sparkling wit such as Mildred possessed.

During the long vacation which Mildred spent in the family she had barely tolerated her, while Mildred's open defiance of her opinions and cool indifference to herself had only widened the gulf between them. She had at first opposed Lillian's visiting Beechwood, but when she saw how her heart was bent upon it she yielded the point, thinking the while that if Lawrence on his return showed signs of going, too, she would drop a hint into his father's ear. Lawrence was going—she had dropped her hint—and, standing without the door, she had listened to the result, and received a new suggestion on which to act in case it should be necessary.

Well satisfied with her morning's work, she glided up the stairs just as Lawrence came from the library and passed out into the street. His interview with his father somewhat disturbed him, while at the same time it had helped to show him how strong a place the brown-eyed Mildred had in his affections.

"And yet why should I think so much of her?" he said to himself as he walked slowly on. "She never can be anything to me more than a sister. I must marry Lillian, of course, just as I have always supposed I should. But I do wish she knew a little more. Only think of her saying the other day that Rome was in Paris, she believed! How in the name of wonder did she manage to pass muster?"

Mildred Wilton, who sat next to Lillian at the examination, might perhaps have enlightened him somewhat, but as she was not there he continued his cogitation.

"Yes, I do wonder how she happened to pull through, knowing as little of books as she does. She writes splendidly, though! I saw this time he had reached a station, upon leaving which she prepared to read again the letter received the previous night from Lillian. "Such a happy way of committing her ideas to paper," he thought. "There must be more in her head than her conversation indicates. Perhaps father is right, after all, in saying she will make a better wife than Mildred."

At this point he was roused from his reverie, being asked for his ticket; but he relapsed into it again, and, by the time he reached the terminus it was difficult telling which stood the better chance of being Mrs. Lawrence Thornton, Lillian or Mildred.

CHAPTER X.

It were all one

That I should love a bright particular star,
And think to wed it. *Shakespeare.*

"Come, Milly—do hurry!" said Lillian to Mildred on the afternoon of the day when Lawrence was expected. "It seems as though you never would get all that hair braided. Thirty strands, as I live, and here I am wanting you to arrange my curls, you do it so much better than I can."

"Plenty of time," returned Mildred; "Lawrence won't be here this hour."

"But I'm going to the station," returned Lillian, "and I saw Finn going out to harness just now. Oh, I am so anxious to see him! Why, Milly, you don't know a thing about it, for you never loved anybody like Lawrence Thornton."

"How do you know?" asked Mildred; and, catching instantly at the possibility implied, Lillian exclaimed:

"Do you, as true as you live, love somebody?"

"Yes, a great many somebodies," was the answer, while Lillian persisted:

"Yes, yes; but I mean some man—somebody like Lawrence Thornton. Tell me!" and the little beauty began to pout quite becomingly at Mildred's want of confidence in her.

"Yes, Lily," said Mildred, at last. "I do love somebody quite as well as you love Lawrence Thornton, but it is useless to ask his name, as I surely shall not tell."

Lillian saw she was in earnest, and she forbore to question her, though she did so wish she knew, and she stood puzzling her weak brain to think "who it was Mildred Wilton loved."

The beautiful braid of thirty strands was finished at last, and then Mildred declared herself ready to attend to Lillian, who rattled on about Lawrence, saying "she did not ask Mildred to go with her, because she always liked to be alone with him. That will do," she cried, just as the last curl was brushed; and, leaving Mildred to pick up the numerous articles of feminine wear which in dressing she had left just where she stepped out of them, she tripped gracefully down the walk, and, entering the carriage, was driven to the station.

"Two lovers a body'd s'pose by their actions," said a plain, old-spoken farmer, who chanced to be at the station and witnessed the meeting; while Finn, who, since we saw him last, had been promoted

to the office of coachman, rolled his eyes knowingly as he held the door for them to enter.

"Oh, I'm so glad you've come!" said Lillian, leaning back upon the cushions, and throwing aside her hat the better to display her curls, which Mildred had arranged with a great deal of taste. "I've been expecting you to death."

"Why, I think you've said in your letter you were having a most delightful time."

And Lawrence looked smilingly down upon the little lady, who replied:

"Did I? Well, then, I am; but I think now you've come, Mildred seems a little bit better. Lawrence," and Lillian spoke in a whisper, for they were now ascending a hill, and she did not care to have Finn hear—"Lawrence, I know something about Mildred, but you must never tell—will you? She's in love with a man! She told me so confidentially this morning, but wouldn't tell me his name. Why, how your face flushes up! 'Tis awful hot—ain't it?" and Lillian began to fan herself with her leghorn hat, while Lawrence, leaning from the window, and watching the wheels grinding into the gravelly sand, indulged himself in thoughts not wholly complimentary either to Lillian or to the man whom Mildred Wilton loved.

"What business had Lillian to betray Mildred's confidence, even to him? Had she no delicate sense of honour? Or what business had Mildred to be in love?" and, by the time the carriage turned into the avenue, Lawrence was about as uncomfortable in his mind as he well could be.

"There! Mildred! I wish she beautiful with those white flowers in her hair!" cried Lillian; and, looking up, Lawrence saw Mildred standing near a garden little way off.

With this thought he turned to people waiting the arrival of guests, she had left Mr. Wilton and Oliver, who was sitting in the parlour, and walked slowly down the avenue until she saw the carriage coming, when she stopped beneath the trees.

"Get in here, Milly—get in," said Lillian, and, hastily alighting, Lawrence ordered her to be seated, feeling strongly tempted to push the first woman through, which she thought she might do.

"She has been walking fast," he thought, and he was about to say so, when Lillian startled them with the exclamation:

"Why don't you kiss her, Lawrence, just as you do me?"

Lawrence thought of the man, and rather coolly replied:

"I never kissed Miss Wilton in my life—neither would she care to have me."

"Perhaps not," returned Lillian, while Mildred's cheeks flushed crimson—"perhaps not, for she is a bit of a prude, I think; and then, too, I heard her say she didn't like you as well as she did Clara."

"Oh, Lillian, when did I say so?" and Mildred's eyes for an instant flashed with anger.

"You needn't be so cross," laughed Lillian. "You did say so, that first night I came here. Don't you remember that I surprised you telling Oliver how Uncle Thornton kept you looking over those old stones for fear you'd talk with Lawrence, and how you hated them all?"

"Lillian," said Lawrence, sternly, "no true woman would ever wantonly divulge the secrets of another, particularly if that other be her chosen friend."

"Suspected they'd end in a row when I said 'em so lovin'!" muttered Finn; and, cracking up his horses, he landed them at the gate just as Lillian began to pout, Mildred to cry, and Lawrence to wish he had stayed at home.

"Tears, Gipsy? Yes, tears as true as I live," said Mr. Wilton, who had come down to meet them, and with his broad hand he wiped away the drops resting on Mildred's long eyelashes.

"Nothing but perspiration," she answered, laughingly, while he rejoined:

"Hanged if I ever saw it look like that then!"

Telling him "he hadn't seen everything yet," she forced her old sunny smile to her face and ran up the walk, followed by Lawrence and Lillian, who ere they reached the portico were on the best of terms, Lillian having called him a "great hateful," while he in return had playfully pulled one of her long curls.

The cloud, however, did not so soon pass from Mildred's heart, for she knew Lawrence Thornton had received a wrong impression, and what was worse than all, there was no means of rectifying it.

"What is it, Gipsy? What ails you?" asked Mr. Wilton, noticing her abstraction. "I thought you'd be in the seventh heaven when you got Lawrence Thornton here, and now he's come you are bluer than a whetstone."

Suddenly remembering that she must give some directions for supper, Mildred ran off to the kitchen, where she found Finn edifying his sister Lucy with an account of the meeting between Lawrence and Lillian.

"She stood there all ready," said he, "and the minute the train stopped he made a dive and

hugged her—so," and Finn's long arms wound themselves round the shoulders of his portly mother, who repaid him with a cuff such as she had been wont to give him in his babyhood.

"Miss Lily didn't do that, I tell you," said Finn, rubbing his ear; "she liked it, and stood as still. But who do you s'pose Miss Milly's in love with? Miss Lily told Mr. Thornton how she confessed to her this morning that she loved a man."

"In course she'd love a man," put in Rachel. "She'd look well lovin' a gal, wouldn't she?"

"There ain't no bad taste about that, nuther, let me tell you, old woman," and Finn's brawny feet began to cut his favourite pigeon wing as he thought of a certain girl in the village. "I axes yer pardon, Miss Milly!" he exclaimed, suddenly bringing his pigeon wing to a close as he caught sight of Mildred, who had overheard every word he said.

With a heart full almost to bursting she hastily issued her orders, and then ran up to her room, and, throwing herself upon the bed, she did just what any girl would have done—cried with all her might.

"To think Lily should have told him that!" she exclaimed, passionately. "I wish he had not come here."

"You don't wish so any more than I," chimed in a voice, which sounded much like that of Lillian Velle.

She knew that Mildred was offended, and, seeing her go up the stairs, she had followed her, to make peace, if possible, for Lillian, while occasionally transgressing, was constantly asking forgiveness.

"I'm always doing something silly," she said; "and then you did tell Clara you didn't like Lawrence."

"That's that," sobbed Mildred. "Finn says you told him I loved somebody."

"That's all right!" exclaimed Lillian. "What business had she to listen and then to talk about it? It's none of your business, I tell you!"

"Then why don't you quit it yourself?" asked Mildred, looking away from the hand which was holding her, and at the thirty strands.

"What an awful temper you have got, Milly!" said Lillian, looking herself very comely by the window, and looking out upon the lawn. "I should suppose you'd try to control it this hot day. I'm almost melted now."

And thus showing how little she really cared for her foolish thoughtlessness, Lillian fanned herself complacently, wondering why Mildred should feel so bad if Lawrence did know.

"Gipsy," called Mr. Wilton, from the lower hall, "supper is on the table. Come down."

In the present condition of her face Mildred would not for the world show herself to Lawrence Thornton, and she said to Lillian:

"You'll make some excuse for me, won't you?"

"I'll tell them you're cross," returned Lillian, and she did, adding by way of explanation: "Milly told me this morning that she was in love, I told Lawrence, Finn overheard me, and, like a meddlesome fellow as he is, repeated it to Mildred, who is as wild about it as any person."

"Mildred in love!" repeated Mr. Wilton. "Whom is she in love with?"

In a different form Lawrence had asked himself that same question many a time within the last hour; but, not caring to hear the subject discussed, he adroitly turned the conversation to other topics, and Mildred soon heard them talking pleasantly together, while Lillian's merry laughter told that her mind at least was quite at ease. Lillian could not be unhappy long, and was now quite delighted to find herself the sole object of attraction to three of the male species.

Supper being over, she led the way to the back piazza, where, sitting close to Lawrence, she rattled on in her simple, childish way, never dreaming how, while seeming to listen, each of her auditors was thinking of Mildred up the stairs.

For a time Oliver lingered, hoping Mildred would join them again, but as she did not he at last took his leave.

From her window Mildred saw him going down the Gold Spring path, and, with a restless desire to know if he thought she had acted very foolishly, she stole out the back way, and, taking a circuitous route to avoid observation, reached the gable roof and knocked at the door of Oliver's room just after he had entered it.

"May I come in?" she said.

"Certainly," he answered. "You are always welcome here."

And he pushed toward her the stool on which she usually sat, but pushed it so far from himself to suit Mildred's ideas.

She could not remember that she was no longer the little girl who used to lavish so many sisterly caresses upon the boy Oliver; neither did she reflect that she was a maiden now of seventeen, and he a man of twenty-one, possessing a man's heart, even though the casket which enshrined that heart was blighted and deformed.

Drawing the stool closer to him, she rested her

burning cheek upon his hand, and then waited for him to speak.

"You have been crying, Milly," he said, at last, and she replied:

"Yes, I've had an awful day. Lillian led me into confessing that I loved somebody, never dreaming that she would tell it to Lawrence; but she did, and she told him, too, that I said that I hated all the Thorntons. Oh, Oliver, what must he think of me?"

"For loving somebody or hating the Thorntons, which?" Oliver asked, and Mildred replied:

"Both are bad enough, but I can't bear to have him think I hate him, for I don't. I—oh, Oliver, when you guess? don't—though why should you, when you have loved only me?"

"Only you, Milly—only you," said Oliver, while there came a mist before his eyes as he thought of the hopeless anguish the loving her had brought him.

But not for the world would he suffer her to know of the mighty love which had become a part of his very life, and he was glad that it was growing dark, so she could not notice the whiteness of his face nor the effort that it cost him to say, in his usual quiet tone:

"Milly, do you love Lawrence Thornton?"

He knew she did, but he would rather she should tell him so, for he fancied that might help to kill the pain which was gnawing at his heart.

"I have never kept anything from you, Oliver," she said, "and if you are willing to be troubled, I want to tell you all about it. Shall I?"

"Yes, tell me," he replied.

And, nestling so close to him that she might have heard the beating of his heart, Mildred told him of her love, which was so hopeless because of Lillian Velle.

"I shall never be married," she said, "and when we are old we will live together, you and I, and I shall forget that I ever loved anybody better than you; for I do—forgive me, Oliver," and her little, soft, warm hand crept after the cold, clammy one, which moved farther away as hers approached, and at last hid itself behind the chair, while Mildred continued: "I do love him the best, though he has never been to me what you have. But I can't help it. You are my brother, you know, and it's all so different. I don't suppose you can understand it, but try to imagine that you are not lame, nor small, but tall and straight and manly as Lawrence Thornton, and that you loved somebody—me, perhaps."

"Yes, you—say you, Milly," and the poor, deformed Oliver felt a thrill of joy as he thought himself "tall and straight and handsome, and loving Mildred Wilton."

"And suppose I did not love you in return," said Mildred, "wouldn't your heart ache as it never has ached yet?"

Oliver could have told her of a heartache such as she had never known, but he dared not, and he was about framing some word of comfort when Mr. Wilton's voice was heard, below, asking if his runaway were there.

"Oh, it's too bad!" said Mildred. "I wanted to have such a nice long talk, and have not said a word I came to say; but it cannot be helped."

"And kissing the lips which inwardly kissed her back a thousandfold, though outwardly they did not move, she hurried down the stairs, where the old man was waiting for her."

"I thought I should find you here," he said, adding that it was not polite in her to run off from her guests.

Mildred made no reply, and, knowing from past experience that it was not always safe to reprove her, he walked on to silence until they reached the house, where Lillian greeted Mildred as if nothing had occurred, while Lawrence made himself so agreeable that when at last they separated for the night the shadow was entirely gone from Mildred's face and nearly so from her heart.

The next day was excessively hot and sultry, confining the young people to the cool, dark parlour where Lillian fanned herself furiously, while Lawrence turned the pages of a book and Mildred drummed listlessly upon the piano. Oliver did not join them, and Lucy, who, just before dinner went down to the Cold Spring for water, brought back the news that he was suffering from one of his nervous headaches.

"He needs more exercise," said Lawrence. "I mean to take him with me this afternoon when I go down to bathe in the river."

Accordingly, about four o'clock, he called upon Oliver, who looked pale and haggard, as if years of suffering had passed over him since the previous night. Still, he was so much better that Lawrence ventured to propose his going to the river.

"No matter if you can't swim," he said; "you can sit upon the grass and look at me."

Oliver knew that the fresh air would do him good, and he went at last with Lawrence to the quiet spot which the latter had selected, partly because it was

remote from any dwelling, and partly because the water was deeper there than at the points higher up.

Sitting down beneath a tree, which grew near the bank, Oliver watched his companion as he plunged boldly into the stream and struck out for the opposite shore.

"Why am I not like him, instead of being thus feminine and weak?" was the bitter thought creeping into Oliver's heart, when suddenly a fearful cry rose on the air—a cry of "Help! I'm cramped! oh, help me, Clubs!" and, turning in the direction whence it came, Oliver saw a frightened face disappearing beneath the water, while the outstretched hand, which went down last, seemed imploring him for aid.

In an instant Oliver stood by the river bank, and when that face came up again he saw that it was whiter than before, and the voice was fainter which uttered another name than that of Clubs. At first Oliver thought it could not be, but when it came a second time he reeled as if smitten by a heavy blow, for he knew then that the drowning man had cried out:

"Milly! dear Milly!" as if he thus would bid her his farewell.

For a second Oliver stood spell-bound, while, like lightning, thought after thought traversed his whirling brain.

Lawrence was his rival, and yet not his rival, for, even had he never been, such as Oliver Hawkins could not hope to win the quondam Mildred—the Mildred who would weep when at night they carried back to Beechwood a rigid corpse, and told her it was Lawrence.

She would come to him for comfort, as she always did, and how could he tell her he had looked silently on and seen him die?

There would be bitter reproach in the eyes which never yet had rested upon him save in love, and rather than meet that glance Oliver resolved at last to save Lawrence Thornton, even if he perished in the attempt.

"Nobody will mourn for the cripple," he said. "Nobody miss me but Mildred, and Lawrence will comfort her;" and with one last, hurried glance at the world, which had never seemed so bright as on that July afternoon, the heroic Oliver sprang into the river and struck out for the spot where Lawrence last went down.

He forgot that he could not swim—nor knew that he was swimming—for one thought alone was uppermost in his mind, and that a thought of Mildred.

Here was the name upon his lips—here the image before his mind as he struggled in the rolling river—for her he ran that fearful risk—and the mighty love he bore her buoyed him up, until he reached the spot where the waters were still in wild commotion.

By what means he grasped the tangled hair—held up the rigid form and took it back to the shore—he never knew; it passed so like a dream.

With an almost superhuman effort he dragged the body up the bank, laid it upon the grass, and then his feeble voice, raised to its highest pitch, went echoing up the hill, but brought back no response.

Through the soft summer haze he saw the chimneys of the Beechwood mansion, and the cupola on the roof where Mildred often sat, ay, and where she was sitting now.

But his voice did not reach her, or if it did she thought it was some insect's hum, and turned again to her book, all unmindful of the dying Lawrence beneath the maple tree, or of the distracted Oliver, who knelt above him, feeling for his pulse and dropping tears like rain upon his face.

"I must go for help, and leave him here alone," he said, at last, and he started on his way, slowly, painfully, for ere plunging into the river he had thrown aside his shoes, and his poor, tender feet had been cut upon a sharp-pointed rock.

But not for this did he linger, and kept on, while his knees shook beneath him, and in his ears there was a buzzing sound like the rush of many waters. Human strength could not endure much more, and by the time he reached his grandmother's gate he sank to the ground and crawled slowly to the door. In wild fright old Hepsy came forth, asking what was the matter.

"Lawrence!" he gasped—"he's drowned—he's dead!"

Then from his mouth and nose the crimson tide gushed out, and Hepsy had just cause for screaming as she did:

"Help! Murder! Fire! Mildred Wilton! Oliver is dead, and Lawrence too!"

From her seat in the balcony, where she had gone to catch the evening breeze, Mildred heard the cry, for Hepsy's voice was shrill and clear, and it rang out like an alarm-bell. Mildred heard her name—heard too that Oliver was dead, and bounding down the stairs she went flying down the Cold Spring path, while close behind her came the wheezing

Mr. Wilton, with Lillian following slowly in the rear.

On the floor, just where he had fainted, Oliver was lying, and Mildred's heart stood still when she saw his dripping garments and the blood stains round his pallid lips.

"Poor, poor Oliver," she said, kneeling down beside him and wringing his wet hair. "Where has he been?"

At the sound of her voice his eyes unclosed, and he whispered, faintly:

"Lawrence, Milly. Lawrence is dead under that tree."

Then, for one brief instant, Mildred fancied herself dying, but the sight of Lillian, who had just come in, brought back her benumbed faculties, and, going up to her, she said:

"Did you hear, Lily? Lawrence is dead—drowned! Let us go to him together. He is mine, now, as much as yours."

"Oh, I can't, I can't!" sobbed Lillian, cowering back into a corner. "I'm afraid of dead folks! I'd rather stay here."

Mr. Wilton, who thoroughly disliked her, was now out of all kind of patience.

"Go to the house, then, and see that my chamber is ready for the body," and without waiting to see if his orders were obeyed, he hastened after Mildred, who was flying over the distant fields as if she sported a pair of unseen wings.

She saw the stains from Oliver's wounded feet, and knowing that she was right she ran on and on until she reached the spot, whither other aid had preceded her, else Lawrence Thornton had surely floated down the deep, dark river of death.

Two villagers, returning from a neighbouring wood, had found him lying there, and were doing for him what they could when Mildred came up, begging of them to say if he were dead.

"Speak to him, Miss Wilton," said one of the men. "That may bring him back—it sometimes does;" but Mildred's voice, though all powerful to unlock Oliver's scattered senses, could not penetrate the lethargy which had stolen over Lawrence, and, with an ominous shake of their heads, the two men lifted him between them, and bore him back to the house, where Lillian, in her own room, was sobbing as if her heart would break, and saying to Rachel's grandchild, who had toddled in and asked what was the matter:

"Oh, I don't know; I want to go home and see Geraldine."

"Go home, then," the old man finally added.

With one scornful glance at Lillian, who, as Lawrence was borne past her door, covered her face with her hands and moaned: "Oh, I can't look at him," Mildred saw that everything was made comfortable, and then all through the anxious, exciting hour which followed she stood bravely by, doing whatever was necessary for her to do, then she turned away, whispering, mournfully:

"He is dead!"

(To be continued.)

FIELD, FOREST, AND FLOOD.—Fifty years ago a father was not ashamed to put his son to the plough or to a mechanical trade, but now they are "too feeble" for bodily labour; one has a pain in his side, another a slight cough, another "a very delicate constitution," another is nervous; and so poor Bobby or Billy or Tommy is sent off to the City. It seems never to occur to their foolish parents that moderate manual labour in the pure and bracing air of the country is just what these puny lads need, and that to send them to the crowded and unhealthy City is to send them to small salaries and early graves instead of becoming jolly, strong tillers of the soil, for there is room for all, and a good landlord can find room for the sons in nine cases out of ten. This is the idea of a correspondent, and although we cannot quite make it mathematically correct, there is a quality of truth in it still, and we give it vent. Say that farmers would not be quite so high, and employ some of the son labour themselves—not in manual work, but in making high-class work—how would that be? There is really plenty of high-class work to be done on farms which would pay infinitely better than clerkship, supposing the farmer is wise enough and sons instructed enough.

WAR horses, when hit in battle, tremble in every muscle, and groan deeply, while their eyes show deep astonishment. During the battle of Waterloo some of the horses, as they lay upon the ground, having recovered from the first agony of their wounds, fell to eating the grass about them, thus surrounding themselves with a circle of bare ground, the limited extent of which showed their weakness. Others were observed quietly grazing on the field, between the two hostile lines, their riders having been shot off their backs; and the balls flying over their heads, and the tumult behind, before and around them, caused no interruption to the usual instinct of their nature. It was also observed that when a charge of cavalry went past near to any of

the stray horses already mentioned, they would set off, form themselves in the rear of their mounted companions, and, though without riders, gallop strenuously along with the rest, not stopping or limping when the fatal shock with the enemy took place. At the battle of Kirk, in 1745, Major Macdonald having unhorsed an English officer, took possession of his horse, which was very beautiful, and immediately mounted it. When the English cavalry fled the horse ran away with its captor, notwithstanding all his efforts to restrain him; nor did it stop until it was at the head of the regiment, of which, apparently, its master was the commander. The melancholy and at the same time ludicrous figure which Macdonald presented when he thus saw himself the victim of his ambition to possess a fine horse, which ultimately cost him his life upon the scaffold, may be easily conceived.

DID HE PROPOSE?

"I COULDN'T do it," said Martyn Ellerslie, with a little shudder.

"Pooh!" said Guy Barnes.

It was just the seductive hour before gas-jets are lighted and window-blinds pulled down—the delicious twilight, when grate-fires shine like burning masses of ruby, and people sitting there beside grow mildly confidential. It was snowing a little outside; all the better, for the click of the crystalized pearl against the plate-glass filled up the silences, and made the cozy warmth of the room luxuriously delightful! And Martyn Ellerslie's pleasant brown eyes, fixed full on the fire, saw—no one can tell what, or how much, they saw!

"Suppose she should say 'No!'" he burst out, seemingly apropos to nothing at all.

"Suppose she shouldn't!" observed Guy, dryly.

"I tell you, old fellow, it's exactly like having a tooth out. Your friends stand by and say: 'Be a man; it's nothing!' It isn't they who are under the dentist's forceps!"

"Complimentary to Miss Glen?"

"Nonsense! You know not what I mean. But, really and truly, I've tried, and I can't do it!"

"Very well!" said Barnes, indifferently, "then it's an understood thing that you are to live and die an old bachelor?"

"I didn't say that!"

"Oh, I beg your pardon. You expect Fanny is going to propose to you; that is it?"

"You are a heartless miscreant!" Ellerslie cried out, half laughing, half impatient, as he sprang to his feet and tossed the remnant of his cigar into the fire, "and I shall not waste any more time upon you—unless, indeed, you'll go round to the Fair with me?"

"Where Fanny Glen has a stand? Not if I know it! The money-market is rather tight with me just at present, and these fancy-fairs are no better than dens of robbers, where a defenceless young man is concerned."

And Martyn Ellerslie went on his way alone.

The hall was all aglitter with gas-lights and fragrant with flowers when he got there; the pretty feminine spiders lurked each near her well-laden tables, all smiles and dimples, while the throng of victims ebbed and flowed around them.

Mr. Ellerslie found himself greeted with acclamations.

"You will take a share, Mr. Ellerslie."

"Do, please, put your name down here, Mr. Ellerslie; there are only ten blanks left."

"Oh, Mr. Ellerslie, you are the very one we are waiting for. I've kept seven for you—seven is always a lucky number."

"Mr. Ellerslie! Mr. Ellerslie! don't pray spend all your money until you've taken a share in this mammoth doll, with a trunk full of clothes."

And thus our hero was flung hither and yon, on the waves of the fair, drawing nearer, however, with every subscription, to the table over which shone the blue stars of Fanny Glen's eyes!

But, when he got there, he was smitten with a sudden silence.

Fanny looked wonderingly up.

"It's—it's a fine evening," he hazarded.

"Is it?" asked Fanny. "Why I thought it was snowing!"

"So it is," said our hero, growing very red and overturning with his elbow a crimson Venetian flask (for which he immediately had to pay a sovereign). "I—I mean it isn't a very fine evening."

"Oh!" said Fanny.

"Yes," said Mr. Ellerslie, feeling acutely that he had made a donkey of himself.

And then he went away, and didn't see Fanny Glen again the whole evening—probably because she was the only person in the whole room that he cared to fig about seeing at all. But so unkind is Fate to love and lovers!

Just as he was edging his way out of the place, in a very dispirited and dejected frame of mind, there was a rush and a flutter, and he heard his own name called in all the notes of the human gamut.

"What is it?" he demanded, vaguely staring around him.

"You've drawn the big doll!" cried little Sibyl Percy, dancing up to him, and laying in his arms the huge waxen abomination with its flossy yellow curls, and impossible pink-and-white complexion; while somebody else brought the big trunk and little band-box.

"It's just like travelling with a wife," said Sibyl, mischievously.

"But what the—ahem! what am I to do with it?" asked our bewildered hero.

"Give it to somebody," said Sibyl, inwardly hoping he would act promptly on the suggestion and bestow his prize on her. "Any one would be delighted to receive such a present."

"Do you think they would?" said Mr. Ellerslie, vacantly. And then—he went away.

"Great stupid fellow!" cried Sibyl, spitefully, and she tripped back to her table.

"I never saw such a goose," said Laura Barrington, who had carried the trunk, and who had three little sisters of her own at home.

"But what am I to do with it?" said Mr. Ellerslie to himself, as he traversed the wintry gloom of the midnight streets. "Oh, I have it! I'll give it to Fanny Glen—and she can make a Christmas present of it to her little black-eyed cousin!"

And he laid the doll, rejoicing, on his sofa, and went to bed, sinking into dreamland just about the time that Fanny Glen was taking the hair-pins out of her magnificent golden hair before the dressing-bureau in her own apartment.

"Why, Fanny, what ails you?" cried Dora, her elder sister. "You're crying."

"I'm so tired!" guiltily confessed poor Fanny.

And she wept herself to sleep, thinking how foolish she had been, and that of course Martyn Ellerslie didn't care a straw about her. Why should he?

Mr. Ellerslie rose the next morning full of his momentous resolve, and made such a toilet that the very landlady's little boy, seeing him go out with the big doll neatly encased in her pasteboard box under his arm, ejaculated, profanely:

"Oh, my eye, what a swell!"

The black-eyed little cousin admitted him. Yes, Cousin Fanny was at home—would he walk into the parlour?

And our hero, before he had fairly made up his mind in what terms to bestow his gift, found himself bowing to a fair-haired vision, in a sunny little room, surrounded by heaps of cut flowers.

"How do you do, Mr. Ellerslie?" said Fanny, colouring and smiling. "I am making bouquets, you see, for to-night."

"Exactly so," said Martyn; and then he reflected how much more appropriate a remark he might have made, and turned very red.

"Pray sit down," said Fanny.

"I—I—the fact is, Miss Glen," said Mr. Ellerslie, plunging in sheer desperation into the midst of his subject, "I have called—I hope you won't be vexed—you have only to say so if you don't like it."

Fanny dropped her sprig of heliotrope, and looked up in surprise.

"I know it isn't of much consequence," went on Mr. Ellerslie, turning the pasteboard box round and round in confusion, "but if you'll accept it—I've known and esteemed you so long, and—"

The damask roses deepened on Fanny's fair face. It had come at last, then, the proposal she had anticipated so long and anxiously.

"Not of much consequence. Oh, Mr. Ellerslie!" she repeated, reproachfully.

"Would you care for it?" he demanded, quite oblivious, in the embarrassment of the moment, that he hadn't even named his gift.

"Care for it?" The tears sparkled into Fanny's eyes. "When—when you know that I love you, Martyn."

And she ran into the arms of our astonished hero.

When he went down the door-steps he was an engaged young man, how and when he scarcely knew himself. And, as Fate would have it, the first personage against whom he stumbled was Guy Barnes.

"Hallo!" said Guy. "What's up?"

"Don't speak so loud," said Ellerslie, passing his arm through that of his friend. "She's engaged to be my wife."

"Who is the divine Fanny, the fairest of her sex?"

"Of course, whom else should it be?"

"But I thought you couldn't screw your courage up to the proposing mark."

"I didn't propose."

Guy Barnes stared.

"You—didn't—propose? Then how could she have accepted you?"

"That's just what I can't exactly comprehend myself," said the puzzled lover. "We are engaged—that is certain—but I can't for the life of me remember when or how I proposed!"

"But of course you proposed," persisted Guy.

"People always do get a little flurried, you know."

"Do they? Well, I suppose that was the case with me. But I don't remember—"

"Oh, don't be a niany!" said Guy Barnes, impatiently.

"I wish I could remember just what I said, though," observed Mr. Ellerslie.

And even after he was duly married he never could quite recall whether he proposed or not. But as long as dear little Fanny was all his own what did it signify?

A. R.

READY-MADE DRESSES.

THE time is fast coming when there will be no need of wasting time in the preparation of ladies' wardrobes—when everything that a lady needs can be bought ready-made, of the best sort, and at reasonable prices. To-day, either the very rich, or else those who have only cheapness in view, can do this; but it will be possible to suit delicate tastes and moderate purses in a year or two, and just as common to buy dresses in this way as gloves or shoes.

Time was when to knit one's own stockings was necessary and virtuous, and the woman who should have bought a shirt for her husband would have been the scorn of her sex. We all remember when ready-made under-wear was dubbed "disgusting." Now it is quite proper to wear it. Instead of spending at least a month in weary stitching, the mother "shops" for a day, and fits her half-dozen children with all they need, before she fits with them to "the country," and, thank fortune, before many years are over, there will be nothing that cannot be provided as easily.

The reason why the cheaper ready-made garments will not "fit" any one without alteration to-day is because the patterns are inelegant and the proportions wrong. A perfectly elegant pattern, cut according to the artistic measurements of the human figure, will fit any well-proportioned person who is of the height for which the garment is prepared. Any one can see at a glance that the ordinary linen articles strung out at the ordinary shop, have, as a general thing, been cut without regard to this, especially about the sleeves. These are sometimes half again as long as the arm of a woman whose waist would match with it could properly be, while the neck is cut to fit that of a prize-fighter. But inspect some of those costly dresses, and you will notice that you can always fancy a graceful woman wearing them; that the neck is what it ought to be, that the sleeves would be properly filled by pretty, plump arms, and that there is room enough for the bust and shoulders, and not too much for the waist. We have seen elegance added to the figure by one of these dresses, while in a common ready-made thing the same person looked deformed.

Dress-cutting is becoming a more artistic thing every day. The time will come when monstrosities will disappear, because there is no sale for them, and when the "cut" of all ready-made garments will be at least fairly good. Then there will be no more anxious waiting "for that dress," which Madame La Mode promised a month ago, and which comes home with her regrets a day after the wedding; and Madame La Mode herself will be thankful for the change that makes her business less dependent on the freaks of inartistic women, who do not know what they really want. No one will be injured; time will be saved to all, and costume, on the whole, be greatly improved.

You shrug your shoulders and do not think so? Neither did your grandmama believe that ready-made shirts could fit when she made for your grandpapa those mysterious garments with band and gusset and seam, which were the pride of her heart and that of the family seamstress, and which always seemed to need a good-sized feather pillow in the bosom to keep them from bagging. Compare them with to-day's shirts made by measurement and bought by numbers; and, while you are about it, inquire which fit the best, the knitted stockings of the past generation or your own.

M. K. D.

TRAFALGAR SQUARE is about to be beautified by the Duke of Northumberland, who intends to spend some of the purchase money of Northumberland House in making a garden of it. A bed of dwarf evergreens will surround the Lansdowne lions, and the dismal stone flags will give place to neat gravel walks and parterres of flowers.

THERE is now at the South Kensington Museum a collection of furniture which is well worth seeing. It contains Mediaeval Italian, seventeenth-century

English, and Louis Quatorze French furniture. There are some most curious inlaid folding chairs, used in the palace of Urbino; also handsome Italian carriages, love tokens, boxes that held the jesses of hawks, and other rare curiosities. There is also on view at South Kensington a loan exhibition of enamels on metals. The contributors include the Queen, Lady Burdett Coutts, the Duke of Marlborough, the Earl of Warwick, Lord Wharfedale, Sir R. Wallace, Sir Digby Wyatt, Mr. Beresford Hope, and Mr. Gambier Parry. Among those lent by the Queen are miniature portraits of the Prince Consort in armour, the Prince of Wales at fifteen months, the Duke of Kent, the Princess Royal at twenty-six months. Lady Coutts sends portraits of Charles I. and James II. Of course Limoges enamels are largely represented and are of great beauty. Among the Italian enamels is the Collini ewer, lent by Mr. Beresford Hope. Admiral the Hon. Sir Henry Keppel has sent some Chinese enamels. There is also a very valuable collection which is the property of the museum, and was purchased for 18,000*l*.

SCIENCE.

In July last there were no fewer than 43 armoured ships being built for the British navy. They will carry from 26 to 14 guns each.

LONDON tram-cars are to be lighted with gas. A copper reservoir fixed to each car will contain sufficient gas to give a good and steady light for six hours.

MR. DRACON, a Liverpool engineer, has, it is said, invented a machine called a waste water meter, which will enable any water company to keep up a constant service.

It will probably be nearly a year before the 80-ton gun is finished at the Royal Gun Factories in the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, and ready for proof, but the canal bridge over which it will have to pass to reach the proof butts is about to be strengthened to bear its enormous weight.

SIGNALLING AT SEA.—A commission has recently been appointed in France to conduct a series of experiments on a steam organ, called "The Calliope," for signalling, the sound of which, it is stated, may be heard from a distance of fifteen leagues in fine weather, and from a minimum distance of three leagues in foul weather. The period of the autumnal equinoctial gales as a crucial test will be chosen for experiments.

THE CREUSOT IRON WORKS.—It appears from a report that the iron works of Creusot, the first mechanical establishment in France, produced last year 550,000 tons of pig iron, 80,592 tons of rolled iron, 40,597 tons of rolled steel, and 90 locomotives, without taking into consideration bridges, machinery, and miscellaneous apparatus. The consumption of coal during the last twelve months exceeded 550,000 tons. The production especially increased last year, Creusot having attained a high reputation for its steel rails. Creusot sold steel rails last year to the extent of 33,985 tons, whilst, on the other hand, the make of iron rails declined, and did not exceed 26,900 tons.

THE ST. GOTHARD TUNNEL.—This great work when pierced will have a total length of about 14,900 metres; the metre is 39.375 inches. At the end of July 1,956 metres had been driven at the two ends; and at the rate of progress during the past few weeks on the 1st of October next about 2,400 metres will have been pierced. There will thus remain 12,500 metres to complete within six years, requiring an average progress of six metres per day. At present the daily rate is rather less than this distance; during the month of June it was 3 metres at the Goeschenen end of the tunnel, and 2 metres at the Airolo end; since the beginning of August it has been 3m. 50c. at the northern end, and only 1m. 85c. at that of the south.

SULPHUR IN ICELAND.—Dr. Blake gives a full description of the vast deposits of sulphur occurring in Iceland, and points out the necessary steps for its utilization. For its shipment he recommends the port of Húsavík, which is accessible all the year round, and which is situate very near to the sulphur beds of Lake Myvatn, Krabla, and Reykjahlid. The mines are not only rich and extensive but easily worked. The sulphur can be supplied at half the cost of that furnished by the Sicilian mines, which it is believed will soon be exhausted. The earth impregnated with sulphur contains from 50 to 60 per cent., and is from three to six feet in thickness. Vapours arising from the interior of the earth continually deposit fresh supplies.

ARTIFICIAL FURS.—The process consists in first soaking the fur in lime water to loosen the adhesion of the hairs. After washing and drying the piece is stretched upon a board, fur side up, and a solution of glue laid over it, care being taken not to disturb the natural position of the hairs. After the glue has hardened the skin may be pulled off, leaving the ends of the hairs exposed. The latter are then

washed with proper substances, to remove fat, bulbs, etc. An artificial skin of gutta serena, or other waterproof substance, is next laid on top of the glue and allowed to dry so as to form a continuous membrane, when the glue is washed out with warm water. These artificial skins are entirely free from any animal odour, and are more durable, lighter, and more pliable than the natural ones.

USE OF IRON INSTEAD OF LEAD SHOT IN THE RINSING OF BOTTLES.—Lead shot, where so used, often leaves carbonate of lead on the internal surface, and this is apt to be dissolved in the wine or other liquids afterwards introduced, with poisonous results; and particles of the shot are sometimes inadvertently left in the bottle. M. Fordos states that clippings of iron wire are a better means of rinsing. They are easily had, and the cleaning is rapid and complete. The iron is attacked by the oxygen of the air, but the ferruginous compound does not attach to the sides of the bottle, and is easily removed in washing. Besides, a little oxidised iron is not injurious to health. M. Fordos further found that the slight traces of iron had left no apparent effect on the colour of red wines; it had on white wines but very little; and he thinks it might be better to use clippings of tin for the latter.

A NEW SCIENTIFIC MUSEUM.—Operations have begun for the erection of the Peabody Museum in New Haven, which, when completed, will contain some of the largest and richest zoological, geological, and mineralogical collections in the world. The institution is founded under a bequest of 150,000 dollars from the late George Peabody, and is designed to bear the same relation to Yale College as the present Museum of Comparative Zoology does to Harvard. The building will consist of a central edifice and two wings. For the present only one of the latter is to be erected, with a frontage of 115 feet on one street and 100 feet on another. It will cost 160,000 dollars, be built of brick with stone trimmings, fireproof, and contain, including basement, four available storeys. The fourth storey is assigned to archaeology and ethnology, the third to zoology, the second to geology, the first to lecture rooms and mineralogical collections, and the basement to working apartments and a large class of heavy specimens, showing fossils, footprints, etc.

CARBONIC ACID AS A MOTOR.—The possibility of employing carbonic acid as a motor—the successor of steam, as it is termed by the author—is foreshadowed by a paper by Dr. H. Beins. The writer considers that he has discovered a very cheap way of producing carbonic acid in a liquid state and consequently at high tension. When sodium bicarbonate, or the corresponding salt of kalium, in a dry, pulverized state or in a watery solution, is heated in a close space, a part of the carbonic acid is given off and condensed in a non-heated portion of that space, so that, at a temperature of from 636 deg. to 843 deg. Fahr., liquid carbonic acid, says Dr. Beins, can be distilled out of those salts, with a tension of from 50 to 60 atmospheres. This liquid carbonic acid, or "carboleum" as it is called, it is proposed to use to develop gas with which engines are to be driven. The paper on the subject contains a dissertation on the advantages of the plan, but gives so few details regarding its practical application, or with reference to the manufacture of the carboleum or liquid carbonic acid, that the gist of the matter is summed up in the above lines.

PHOSPHOR-BRONZE AXLE BEARINGS.—When two bodies are rubbed against each other (under equal pressure, and at equal velocity), the harder they are the greater is the amount of heat generated; or, on the other hand, the greater the difference of hardness between the two bodies rubbed against each other the less is the heat produced. In the latter case the harder body is more heated than the softer, if of equal size. If, for instance, glass is rubbed against cork, the heating is as 7 to 1 (the copper being heated seven times hotter than the cork); if copper is rubbed against cork, as 4 to 1. The ideal of a bearing which would wear little would be one made of the same material as the axle revolving in it, if there had not to be taken into consideration the wearing of the axle itself and the heating. A bearing made of the softest material, in which an axle of the hardest material revolves, would be the ideal of a bearing which does not heat, and does not out the axle, if the wear of the bearing, and deformation by pressure, etc., had not to be taken in consideration. In practice the best medium must be found which (1) does not out the axle, (2) wears (in itself) as little as possible, and consequently requires a minimum of lubrication, (3) does not heat, even in case lubrication should be neglected, (4) is capable of resisting any possible shock without changing its form, or breaking.

IRON PURIFIES WATER.

ALMOST all large water pipes are of iron, as taxpayers well know when they are called upon to replace the old rusty mains with new ones every few years. But, according to good chemical authority, the iron has an advantage with its defects

Professor Medlock proved by analysis, several years ago, that iron by its action on nitrogenous organic matter produces nitrous acid, which Muspratt called "Nature's scavenger." The latter chemist found, as a general result, that, by allowing water to be in contact with a large surface of iron, in about 48 hours every trace of organic matter was either destroyed or rendered insoluble, in which state it could be purified effectually by filtration.

Medlock found, on examining the water at Amsterdam, which smelt and tasted badly, that the sediment charred on ignition, and was almost consumed, showing that it consisted of organic matter. He also found that, instead of taking iron from the service pipes, the water before entering those and an iron reservoir contained nearly half a grain of iron to the gallon; while in the water issuing from the pipes there was only an unweighable trace. Before entering the reservoir the water holding iron in solution formed no deposit, while the water coming from the pipes and freed from iron gave the organic sediment above mentioned.

He then made analyses of water brought in contact with iron and water not in contact, with the result that the water which had not touched iron contained 2.10 grains of organic matter, and 0.96 grain iron; the other gave only a slight trace of both, showing plainly that the organic matter in the water was either decomposed or thrown down by contact with iron; and this water, when filtered, was found to be clear, of good taste, with no smell, and free from organic matter.

It is not stated in what shape the iron was held in solution, but it was probably in that of carbonate, the usual iron salt of springs, since carbonic acid is so common in water in general. These facts may be made useful in certain places and ways in effecting the purification of water rendered injurious and offensive by the presence of organic substances. And if the interiors of iron mains could only be kept from rusting by a swabbing with nitric acid, or by a paint of charcoal and plumbago, so much the cheaper.

SWORD MANUFACTURE IN BIRMINGHAM.

THE manufacture of swords is one requiring great skill in all its departments. Success in this work depends upon the acquired skill, the long experience, the educated eye, and the manipulative power which seem to require many generations of workmen before they are attained in their higher excellence. The slightest mistake in making would make a sword-blade useless, and this applies to each of the three great processes through which it has to pass—forging, tempering, and grinding. From the necessity of all the work being skilled work, each part of a sword—the blade, the grip, the hilt, the scabbard—is made by hand, and the witnessing of the manufacture is thereby rendered especially interesting.

The first process is the forging of the blade. The steel comes from Sheffield in double moulds (the length of two blades), as it is called, and is the best steel, and is in strips, each strip being the length of two swords. The workman takes the strip and first breaks or cuts it across the middle. The handle end of the blade is of iron, as this metal bears more knocking about and can be used in a manner that would be fatal to steel. The iron end is then put in the fire, and the tang, or part to fit into the hilt, is forged. The blade is then passed through the fire a large number of times, and beaten out on the anvil in order to distribute the metal equally in every part. At the same time the furrow is worked up the centre of the blade, wide or narrow according to the pattern and size required. In those known as Scotch blades two furrows are beaten. This is a work requiring great care and skill. The future worth of the blade depends upon the skill of the forger.

After forging follows the most delicate and important part in making a sword blade—tempering. On this process depends the perfection of the weapon, and it is quite pleasant to listen to Mr. Reeves while he descants on this part of the work. The object of tempering being, of course, to give the steel the required elasticity, it must not be too hard or it will break, and it must not be too soft or it will bend; but must be so equally tempered that, when its point is pressed on the ground, the blade will when free at once take its natural shape without hurt or detriment in the slightest degree. The mode by which this great, this necessary quality is secured is as simple as it is effective. Before the blade can be tempered it must be made extremely hard; this is done by first passing it through the fire, and then, while hot, it is plunged into water. The first plunge hardens the blade to such an extreme hardness that it is as brittle as glass, and if thrown down would break into pieces. Again it is passed through the fire and then beaten straight, for the effect of the action of the water on the hot metal is to make it of all shapes. Just at the point at which the blade takes a particular colour, known

at once to the practised eye, it is again plunged into the water which, in technical language, "prevents it going down lower," and is tempered. It can now be bent backwards and forwards without any fear of its breaking, and is ready for the grinder.

The grinding is done on the best Leeds stones, the blade being placed in a frame of wood, and its surface pressed on the stone until the work is done. This also depends upon the skill and the eye of the workman. In grinding the furrows a stone of a peculiar construction is used. The face is cut into raised flutings of the size and shape of the furrows of different swords, and on these the blade is pressed, and the furrows effectually ground. This is called the hollowing stone. Each blade takes from an hour and a half to two or three hours grinding, according to its quality.

The blade is now ready for polishing. This is done on lathes worked by steam. Different-sized wheels are fitted on the spindle, and lard oil and double washed emery are used in the operation. The blade is often put into lime dust during the process; and on the lathe brush used a crocus dust, of deep purple tint and ground very fine, is thrown, and a most brilliant polish is the result.

THE ANT'S INSTINCT.

I SAILED from Australia in the winter of 1859, having on board a cargo of lumber. After being at sea some ten days or more, I discovered that we had on board a large number of passengers, ants and cockroaches. Going through the cabin one evening, our steward said to me, "Cap'n, jes' look a-here." He was standing in the pantry door with a lamp in his hand. On looking into the pantry I saw on the lower shelf a number of large black ants in a huddle, and a half-dozen by themselves, and on the opposite side of the shelf was some sugar which the ants did not seem to notice, which caused me to wonder; the reason, however, soon became apparent. A cockroach made his appearance and went for the sugar; and the group of ants went for him, and, before he fairly got a taste of the sugar, they had him down and killed him in less than a minute; then the six that stood apart from the rest advanced, took up the dead cockroach, and bore him off the shelf. The others remained on the watch, and as soon as another appeared they all pitched in and made short work of it, as before. In the meantime the pall bearers had returned and took this one off the shelf, as they had done the other. I watched until I saw this enacted a half-dozen times, and it was done as regularly as it could have been by men. The ants kept on killing the cockroaches until they had entirely cleared them out, which took but a short time.

Cockroaches do not seem to be at all warlike, but raid about in quest of something to subsist on. But as the ants do not believe in the moiety system, they went in for total annihilation, and had everything their own way. J. H.

THE SWEET SISTERS OF INCHVARRA: OR, THE VAMPIRE OF THE GUILLAMORES.

CHAPTER XXIII.

NOTHING more of especial importance happened on board, unless it was that Shane, the young Irishman, seemed completely carried away by mademoiselle's black eyes and tragic tale, for he haunted her and the children every hour of the day, and while making games for Sylvie and Fay would be weeping in company with the governess over hers, his and anybody else's sorrows which the two could chance upon.

Never had Mademoiselle de Fleury, she declared, seen outside of her own land a being so sympathetic, so tender, so quick, so gallant, so chivalrous, as this poor but eminently admirable young man.

In due time the "Wallachian" reached the harbour where she was to disembark the new regiment and take off the old one then garrisoned there.

Captain Sherrard, of course, soon supplied himself with funds by telegraphing to a London bank, and the so-called brother and sister parted from their hospitable entertainers with the best possible understanding between them.

It was his intention to return at once with Aileen to Ireland, as man and wife; and Shane was to be their body servant. Accordingly, having bidden a friendly farewell to the acquaintances they had made, and especially to Mademoiselle de Fleury, with whom Aileen arranged a correspondence (much to Shane's delight), they stepped ashore.

Driving to an hotel, the captain saw his little charge comfortably disposed of, then hurried off to obtain a licence and a clergyman—also to learn when the

next mail-steamers for Britain touched at the port, and Shane was left as protector to the bride-elect.

"Miss Sherrard," after one of those thorough toilets which one delights in at the close of a lengthy sea trip, spent the time profitably to herself, and amusingly to her bodyguard, who attended upon her, by criticizing the passers-by from the windows of her private parlour.

There chanced to be a livery stable exactly opposite the hotel, and some pretty little "waggonettes" standing in front of an archway.

Aileen admired the vehicles immensely, and prattled away to Shane almost like her old self of how funny her and Vane's Irish ponies would look in such things; and meantime a man who was standing under the archway seemed to admire her immensely, for he never removed his eyes from her face except when she glanced at him, when his gaze would become absorbed in his boots.

Had Aileen's mind at this juncture been less occupied by happy thought she would probably have seen something mysterious in the man's behaviour. Despite the cautious withdrawal of his gaze when Aileen looked in that direction not much penetration would have been needed to divine that the stranger was a watchful spy; but the girl was so possessed by joyous ideas and anticipations that fear and caution were entirely forgotten.

Shane was also, in most exuberant good spirits. The pleasure of trading firm earth again, added to Aileen's engaging prattle, had driven the lost Kathleen from his mind for the time, and the quaint replies which formed his share of the conversation were characterized by the trust Irishman's drollery.

Captain Sherrard returned triumphant. The marriage would take place an hour hence in that same parlour. The licence had been procured, and was fluttered before the face of the little bride with a joy which was certainly reassuring. The English mail steamer was to leave for Liverpool next day at twelve o'clock. They would get spliced, and whisked back to the old sod in no time. Hip, hip, hurrah!

Aileen's wide-opened eyes lifted themselves from the glowing countenance of her lover, and while her lips trembled, and the blushes came and went, those blue eyes filled and overflowed until the tears fell over her cheeks.

Yes, it was too bad to take her by storm that way. She would never have believed he could be so inconsiderate.

"Lovey, dear," cried Sherrard, drawing her up to him by the clasping hands, "you ain't crying because you're to be married to me, are you?"

Shane being away for a box of cigars this little scene was managed with great gusto.

"Yes, I am," returned she, in a quivering, little voice. "It's cruel, it's downright bad in you to hurry me so. It's—it's—not—like—you—Charlie!"

"My own darling girlie, don't cry. Isn't it for your own sake, lovey? Surely you're not repenting? If you are, Aileen, if you are, my girl, I'll give you up, even yet, by Heaven!"

"Would you?" whispered Aileen, glancing, half-frightened, up into his face, which had grown pale and troubled.

"Talk me once for all," said the captain, almost sternly. "You won't have another chance, my dear. You'll be my wife in an hour, unless you wish it different. I know I ain't your sort—I'm like an old fish-obbie alongside of a fairy race-boat—tell me then, Aileen, have you one thought in your little heart drawing you back from me? If you have, I'll respect it and leave you free."

Now was the time to confess that past misfortune. Aileen! Aileen! In the name of happiness and faith, speak!

She felt her heart throb wildly and her cheek grow white. A whisper almost rushed from her lips, but a cowardly fear assailed her. It seemed as if the rustle of angel's wings receded, and a heavy sigh lifted the poor girl's bosom.

"Don't talk that way, Charlie," she said, huskily. "You have every thought of my heart. I am ready to marry you, and I do love you dearly."

"My darling! my darling!" breathed Sherrard, straining her close.

"I was only a little startled at first," she continued, in almost a pleading voice. "It is all so sudden and strange; and I want Vane."

She laid her head down on his shoulder and sobbed, and half was for the courage to be honest, and half because she hungered in this memorable day of her life for her sister.

The lover could only silently kiss the beloved yellow hair which gleamed so close to his lips, and stand afar off, as it were, admiring the tender delicacy of this most fragile and white-souled being.

"I feel choked and oppressed, I think, in this hot room," said Aileen, feeling indeed capable of

strangling herself for remorse; "and, Charlie, I saw such pretty little carriages in the street. Couldn't we—"

"Have a drive?" cried her adorer, delightedly. "So we will. The very thing to pass away the time. Get ready, my pet."

Off went Captain Sherrard across the street and hired one of the very carriages which Miss Aileen had been so taken with, and the most handsome quadruped which the stable afforded was harnessed thereto—for when at home the big sailor prided himself upon being a passable whip.

Ten minutes the vehicle was at the door. And Aileen, in the softest of ermine robes, stepped into it, the subject of enthusiastic criticism from all the idlers in the smoking-room, and with a bound they were off on their pleasure drive.

There chanced to be a very pretty bit of scenery in the vicinity of that maritime city; it is the chosen resort of the fashionables—in truth it might be called the "Ladies' Mile."

It is as appropriate a locality for a tragedy or a lyric poem as one might see the world over in a quiet way. We are not going to describe it, for nobody wants to read descriptions nowadays (which is not much to their credit); but we shall just remark that it ran along for some distance the indigging-bank of the sea-shore, and away down gleamed salt waves through waving pine branches.

As the pair glanced merrily from sunshine to shade under the trees, Aileen looked from side to side with delight at the brilliant colours of the autumn leaves, which made the wooded heights seem blazing with variegated flames.

Captain Sherrard glowed with sympathetic pleasure, but of course his admiration was mainly confined to herself. Never had he seen such gaiety, such innocent and charming joy on her spirituelle face.

How happy they were!

They were prancing round that circular clump of trees which marks the limit of the Ladies' Mile when they came upon a close carriage, which was drawn up on the extreme tip of the grassy tongue of land which divides two arms of sea, with three men standing beside the open door.

One of them held up his hand as a signal for Captain Sherrard to stop, which he did on the spot, supposing that some accident had happened to them.

The next instant Geoffrey Rochester had shot out of the coach and was at Aileen's side.

She glanced once at that hated and almost forgotten face, and a shriek of despair rang through the air.

"My wife, sir," said Rochester, laying his hand like steel upon her unresisting arm, while his eyes glared angrily at his rival. "Come down and be flogged for the villain you are!"

A horrified pause, then the captain hurried himself to the ground, and seized the daring speaker by the collar, and swung him round with a savage violence which threatened to dislocate his neck.

The bystanders rushed forward, and forcibly tore them apart, while Aileen, pale as a corpse, and scarce even shuddering, sat forward with her hands clenched on her knees.

"Yes, I denounce you as a scoundrel and a villain!" repeated Rochester, a deadly sparkle in his eye, "and I claim that woman as my wife."

"It is false!" roared the captain, finding his tongue at last. "You have no more claim on Miss Aileen Guillamore than any other mongrel puppy has! Off with ye, ye sneaking thief!"

"I have plenty of proofs to support me, and friends to back the proofs," returned the other, in a ringing, metallic voice, whose every tone struck on the heart of the poor girl like the hammer on red-hot iron, leaving a crushing impress. "I married the lady with her own consent and in the presence of three witnesses, on board my yacht on the night of the fifth of September, and here is the paper, signed in her own hand"—he tore a paper from his pocket-book and fluttered it as another marriage licence had been fluttered not long ago in the face of the bride—"here is the paper which legalizes that marriage. Ask Mrs. Rochester if I am not right."

Involuntarily Charles Sherrard turned to the girl he loved. Oh, what a poor, shrinking, flinching little face was that! And the eyes dropped away from his, and the mouth quivered.

By all that is holy, can she be false?

He remembered in a moment those little hints, and tempers, and half-repentings. Was this their meaning?

"Aileen?" questioned he, hoarsely.

She only covered the lower in her fright and despair.

"Speak!" said Geoffrey Rochester, with cruel politeness. "Is it possible, madame, that you have concealed from this person the fact of your marriage with me?"

Still no answer. In truth, the hapless child was crushed by the magnitude of her own folly. Now, as never before, she saw it in all its madness.

The captain snatched the paper, and seeing to his despair that it was a genuine English licence of marriage, he strode over with it to Aileen, and it spoke no little knowledge of the human heart in Rochester that he stepped out of the way to allow these two to meet.

Sherrard grasped her firmly by the arm, and exclaimed:

"Look here, little girl! Is this your hand's work?"

She looked up in that deserted face with the wild hope of mercy in her heart, but the first she saw there bade her only tremble.

"I meant to have told you before!" came from between her dry lips.

"Meant to have! Then it's true, is it—it's true!" he groaned out, while his strong voice shook with passion.

"Only let me—oh, listen while I explain!" faltered Aileen, almost inaudibly. "He dragged me away from my friends. I had never seen him before—I refused to marry him—and—"

"Yes, I've heard all that before," broke in her lover, his deep eyes full of deadly fire. "The pity was that it stopped there! I'll not ask you more, ye young Jemima!—I've heard enough."

"Pray listen to the rest," murmured Rochester, with an ironical smile. "It will do you good, sir."

"Oh, Charlotte, for the love of Heaven don't turn against me!" cried Aileen, wringing her hands distractedly. "I thought I was not married to him—I never knew!"

"Is this man the man who married you?"

"Yes, alas—yes, I fear so; but I did not know what I was doing—they dragged me away from me through a ceremony while I was unconscious."

"Girl, I'll listen to no more palaver. If you'd come to me honest when ye first saw that I was taken by ye, and told me the onliest story ye could trump up, I s'pose I'd have believed it all; but now, when I see how ye can hide and deceive, and carry a brave face while the heart of ye is false, all ye can say only turns me the more against ye. Go back to your husband, and don't dare to cross my track again!"

"I loved you. Indeed—indeed I did, my darling!"

"Your darling! What do ye take me for, woman? Did ye think I wanted the love of a girl who had been married?"

He stopped, but the contemptuous silence spoke volumes.

Aileen rose, and with a face white as death, she held up her hands as if to shield herself from the scathing blow; then, with a cry of frenzy, she sprang from the vehicle, and like a madman dashed over the steep declivity and disappeared.

There was a moment of confusion, then the four strangers followed in excited haste; and Captain Sherrard was left alone.

He stood like a stock; his weather-beaten visage was of that dull pallor to which brown faces do turn in moments of agony; his great, smouldering eyes seemed fixed in an introverted stare; his hands were clenched by his sides.

He looked like a man who, having travelled thousands of miles through storm and tempest, through fire and flood, through disease and danger, to reach his home, finds that home a ruin, and the loved ones dead.

The pawing of the impatient horse behind him curiously aroused him.

He went up to her, and patted her sleek neck, and rubbed some dust from her knees with as fond a hand as if his mind was all-conscious of the act; and then he gazed at the empty seat, and at a tiny glove lying upon it with stupid wonder.

Aileen had gone away—she would return in a moment; that was little Yellow Hair's glove.

He took it in his hand, the soft dainty thing; Aileen had gone away!

He muttered the words almost vacantly. The poor fellow's heart was stupored.

Suddenly the sound of voices and the creaking of branches fell upon his ear. The men were returning, and Geoffrey Rochester bore in his arms a dripping and half-senseless form.

Like a thunderbolt came comprehension to Charles Sherrard. The glove was flung from his hand; darkly he gazed at the small, pale face which so often had nestled on his shoulder, now resting on Rochester's, at the lovely form he so often had clasped, now clasped by Rochester.

Aileen had come back—Aileen, the polluted, venomous thing, which had curled into his heart with loathsome guile.

A frenzy seized upon him; with a half-uttered imprecation he snatched his revolver from his breast, levelled it full at the unhappy girl, and fired.

There was a quick flash, report, and curl of smoke—a hoarse cry from Rochester—a shout of dismay from his men—a vision of the infuriated captain struggling with some new adversary, of the pistol whirling out of his hand to a bed of ferns, and then the blinding smoke cleared away, and Sherrard recognized his assailant.

"What! you, Shane?" muttered the captain, driving him from him; then all energy seemed to forsake him.

He sat down on a mossy stone and covered his face with his hands.

Shane rose from his knees covered with dirt, and once or two ugly bruises, and rushed to where Rochester stood holding Aileen tightly in his arms.

"Heaven preserve us. Is she hit, the darling? or did I knock his arm up in time?" cried he, with apprehension.

"Thanks, my good fellow," said Rochester, who was considerably startled himself; "you just saved my wife's life."

Aileen lay with closed eyes and blotted brows, and one would have called her dead, only that large tears were dropping from her blanched cheeks.

"Ochona, mistress, dear!" sobbed Shane, at the sorrowful sight, "what's this at all that's come over ye?" Shane, say, ye'll let me drive her home again to the hotel, when she'll get dirty clothes and a doctor to put life in her."

And the faithful fellow looked with all the gentleness of his supporter.

"I'll take care of her. She's my wife," said Rochester, with a glance of malignant triumph at the stricken figure of his late rival.

And he placed her in the carriage and nodded to his colleagues to depart.

When they were all in the distance, he said, in his own ear, which was carefully raised as to most of the party.

"Mrs. Rochester was stolen from me, her lawful husband. I'll find a way to get her back ever at all costs. I'll make her a servant to go to—murder her. The devil's change of education and attempted murder. He'll pay for that, as well as a reward for the good service you have rendered me."

He tossed a gold piece to the young Irishman, and entering the carriage shut the door.

Shane stooped, quietly picked up the piece, and striding after the vehicle, which was in the act of moving off, dashed it, with unerring aim, full in Rochester's face.

"Keep your ill-gotten money, ye black-livered thief!" he shouted, and springing up the bank, disappeared.

"Stop!" cried Rochester, pale with rage and smothering with pain; for his lip had received a very ugly cut; but the driver did not or would not hear, and he was whirled quickly out of sight, shaking his fist in the direction of Shane's covert.

Captain Sherrard was left alone. The horse had wandered over to a grassy knoll, and was contentedly browsing as well as she could.

The dropping leaves, scarlet and gold and mistle, which Aileen had admired, fell about him with every sigh of the wind; the dropping shadows rained down upon his uncovered head, and seemed to toss his dark hair about in ruthless contempt.

This, which was to have been his marriage-hour, was the dark hour of his life, and the heart of the man was filled with the thirst for blood, and shame and bitterness to the very brim.

Love, purity, innocence, trust—oh, angel-winged visitants, torture not the soul of this well-nigh lost man with your memories!

Away! ye thoughts of good! Away! ye sunny past! The future—yes, come with swift feet the bitter vengeance, the black retribution!

A deep sigh aroused him at last.

He raised his dark and woefully haggard face and looked about him.

The sun was dropping into the ocean line; the trees about him were covered with dew, and on the dim grass near him knelt Shane, wistfully watching him; while tears slowly rolled down his rugged cheeks.

We do not know what might have been the fate of the crushed man but for this slight incident of finding a faithful though humble friend near him in his crisis of suffering and temptation.

Long he looked in Shane's simple face, and at last he held out his hand.

"Shane, honest fellow, don't cry!" said the captain, wondering where his old, blunt tone had gone to.

Shane clutched his hand, and, pressing it between his horny palms, gulped out, tenderly:

"Och, thin, yer honour, shure'n what is it yer after doin'?" There's more than the black trouble work-

in' in yer heart, masher dear; there's the hard thoughts maybe agen them that's whiter than drifted snow for innocence. Oh, masher, bothink ye well afore ye act!"

"Go away, boy! What can you understand about it? It's a black enough business, Shane, and no soft words of yours can mend it. Away, and leave me to myself awhile."

"No, masher," responded the servant, respectfully, but very firmly. "Ye've been with yourself long enough, and misery's poor company. Heaven forgive ye, sir, if ye've given that wate angel over to the hands of enemies!"

"Be dumb on that subject, boy, if ye're wise. Never mention that again! I've made an awful mistake—would have married a woman who was married already. There, my boy, that's enough on that hateful subject."

"Come home, masher, dear, and think it over. The wile maidens deceived! I'll never think the like! She, with tender heart, and the innocent laugh of her rippling up like the smiling dimples on the lake of Killarney, and the wate little dandyl wags ready with the kind deed? She that wrapped her own soft arms round ye to ward off the bullets of the murderin' Englishman? She that wore so brave, and kind, and gay, when the wather would about us, and the wind in the trees? Oh, masher, masher, dear, black was the hour that made ye mistrust the hearting! An' may ye find it some day afore it be too late!"

Strange to say, during this excited outburst Sherrard did not attempt any interruption, but rather listened and fascinated in spite of himself by the praises of one whom he believed to be a despising; and so great was the influence of his humble companion that Shane persuaded him to mount the vehicle with him and drive back to the house that had become the party.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Aileen was anything but unconscious when they reached her from the woman with the white hair, she plunged into the very depths of her lover's anger.

She struggled feebly against those who caught hold of her, pulling more than one man farther into the water than was comfortable, while Rochester stood on the shore dry-shod, cheering on his assistants with words of peculiar fervour. And when at length she was carried in a state of exhaustion to the bank and consigned to his arms she lay perfectly motionless, though quite conscious of all that was passing.

Thus it was her miserable lot to be fully aware of Charles Sherrard's attempt on her life, and Shane's interposition in her favour.

This awful escape so horrified the poor little maid, who had no scruples about taking her own life, that she cared no longer what became of her, but allowed them to do as they pleased with a forlorn and scorned being, who was not even fortunate enough to die; and the consequence was that while both lover and loved were in this state of despair the astute Rochester snatched them with comparative ease.

When the carriage had bowed along for a considerable distance her captor began to adjust his disordered attire, to cease dabbing the cut on his lip with his handkerchief, and generally to straighten his somewhat disorganized get-up.

Then he pulled down both carriage blinds, and, seating himself beside his prize, looked with cold triumph at her.

She was wan and shivering; the salt spray shone on her face and hair; there was a blue circle round the poor little white mouth; and cold tears rolled ceaselessly down from her closed eyes.

She was torn and bruised, dripping, shivering, and crushed in spirit—not the ideal picture of a bonnie bride.

Rochester felt for his brandy flask, passed his arm under her bare head with all the calm airs of ownership—partly put on, no doubt, for the benefit of one of his allies who shared the inside—and put the reviving stimulant to her lips.

That liberty, forlorn as she was, Aileen could not endure.

She started away from him, and, crouching into the extreme corner, with a gasp of terror glared at him.

Rochester coolly returned the flask to his pocket, settled his cuffs, and threw himself back in a comfortable position, while he observed, with no little sang-froid, despite a slight lip acquired by the swelling of his upper lip:

"Very good, my girl! This is not the place to assert my will; but I assure you that you are going on a wrong policy altogether when you keep up a show of rebellion. You are bound to submit to me."

Aileen vouchsafed no reply, but in her half-broken heart she vowed that she would never live to submit to him.



[BETWEEN TWO CLAIMANTS.]

In silence the vehicle rolled through the leafy arcades along the shore where the tide washed the roads about the feet of the rocks, into the narrow streets, past the hotel with the stone portico, and the group of idle young men on the steps.

Aileen, looking through a chink in the side blind against which her forehead was leaning, saw a clergyman standing upon the steps, evidently waiting—saw the portly form of the hotel-keeper beside him, looking up and down the street—and a cry of grief escaped her as sharp as if a dagger had pricked her, for with a refinement of cruelty fate had given her a bird's-eye view, as it were, of all she had lost.

Again Rochester approached her, flask in hand. "You are cold and lapsing into hysterics, Mrs. Rochester," said he, politely. "You had better swallow a few drops of this."

She covered her face with her hands and turned her back to him.

On they went to a ferry, where they drove on to a steamer and began to cross the harbour to the small town which lies on the eastern side.

When about mid-channel they passed a large steamship in the act of turning to get into its dock.

"The Princess," I declare!" exclaimed Rochester, in a low voice to his companion. "Just arrived! All right; the passages are secured, are they not? Fortunate that there will be no delay."

Aileen startled them by another sharp cry. "The Princess!" Why, that was the mail steamer Captain Sherrard had said they were to return in to-morrow! What if he adhered to his plan and took passage with Shane?

Aileen's tears ceased to flow; her little brain began to seethe with many thoughts. Before they had gone much farther, despite her desperate position, hope had lit a feeble torch in her heart.

Again on terra firma, the carriage was driven out into the country through thick fir woods and over a peculiarly stony road for perhaps an hour and a half.

Very little was said by her two jailers, except in contemptuous criticism of the wild scenery. Rochester flung a railway rug over her, but Aileen had enough spirit left in her to pluck it off and throw it at her feet.

Consequently she was bitterly cold and chilled through by the time they came to the end of their drive. Never mind! Had she been frozen to an icicle she was determined to accept nothing from her captor.

She looked sharply about her as the door was opened to see what were her chances of escape.

She saw a large wooden house set in the midst of a level plot of grass, with a small village of barns, stables, and other outhouses in the rear, and a wilderness of blue-green pines and gorgeously coloured hard-wood trees all around.

As she stepped to the ground, disdaining all help, though her limbs were benumbed, the door of the house opened and a strange figure made its appearance.

A tall, stooping woman, clad in a thick, bright shawl, her face pinched and wasted, her dark eyes preternaturally large, her features wearing an expression of deep agitation, came forward.

"Zolande!" cried Aileen, and, scarcely knowing what she did, she flew to her old patient and clung to her as if she had been her dearest friend.

"Alas!" muttered the Spanish woman, in a sudden passionate whisper, "I had prayed never to see thy sweet face again, my little one!"

At the same moment, while pressing the cold hands which clung to her, she appeared to repulse the embrace and to wait upon Rochester's commands with perfect deference, while that personage witnessed the meeting rather suspiciously.

"See to Mrs. Rochester's wants, Zolande," said he, harshly. "Give her dry clothing and suitable refreshment; and see that you don't betray the trust placed in you a second time," he added, with a satirical smile playing over his keen features.

The woman led Aileen up a wooden staircase into a large, square room, furnished with a homespun carpet, a rickety, spider-legged table, some wooden chairs, with a shell of unknown crustaceans painted on the backs, a lame sofa propped on a piece of wood, and a large fireplace filled with a furze bush.

Having closed the door of this inviting retreat, Zolande threw herself upon her knees before Aileen, and, pressing her damp garments to her lips, burst into low cries of sorrow, while tears fell in torrents from her eyes.

"Zolande," faltered the girl, trembling with hope and surprise, "are you really my friend?"

"Did not the white dove save me from death at the danger of her own life?" sobbed the woman.

"Ah! I have prayed that she should escape the fowler's snare, and, alas! she is made fast again."

"Yes, Zolande, fast enough; and all hope of joy in life is wrecked, I fear. I am cast off by the man I love—cast off as a vile deceiver, to the mercy of this pitiless monster," whispered Aileen, with her face on the other's shoulder, and her words were smothered by bitter weeping. "I don't know what is to become of me. I can never, never be his wife—never, though he should tear me in a thousand

pieces! Oh, Zolande! if you have any kindness for me in your soul, help me to defy him!"

"Sweet mistress!" returned the Spanish woman, taking her little hands and cherishing them tenderly, "you were like an angel to me who had been so cruel! Can human heart deny gratitude when it knocks for entrance! These blessed hands gave me my life—can Zolande ever forget that? Madame, I am your slave, to work your will, to protect and to succour; but it must be in secret. Should my master suspect, I should never see the white dove more. Be discreet, then, and if I seem hard and cruel, remember it is but to blind him. Hush! he comes! but keep up heart, my beloved little one—Zolande cannot forget!"

She held up one finger to still the other's sobs, while her large eyes glowed with a strange and beautiful light, such as a mother would bestow upon her suffering child; the next moment she was coldly removing Aileen's wet wrappings and ransacking a trunk, which the young girl recognized as one of the belongings of her place of captivity in the light-house, for suitable garments in which to array her.

The foot which had been distinctly audible coming up the bare stairs was heard no more. Zolande held up her finger to enjoin silence, and went on bringing forth some of these gorgeous garments which Rochester seemed to have provided with such lavish profusion for his captive bride.

"He listens," she breathed in Aileen's ear. "Speak, my child, in such guise as to allay his suspicious of us."

"I will die before I ever acknowledge such a dastard as my husband!" cried Aileen, with a spark of thorough hatred in her blue eyes.

"Madame must not speak thus," returned her attendant, actually dismayed at her boldness. "My master is great, and all things bow before him. You are but the dust beneath his feet, over which he treads to reach his ambitious desires! Madame must learn to kiss her lord's hand, and to acknowledge herself his meaneast slave!"

"His slave! the villain! the coward!" shrieked Aileen, forgetting wholly that she was acting; "never while I have the breath of life in me! Let him dare to insult me by any approach, and I will tear him to pieces! I hate him! I despise him beyond all words! His slave! ha, ha, ha!"

The step retired gently downstairs again.

The women looked at each other, and as Aileen's laughter grew more convulsive they rushed into each other's arms.

(To be continued.)



WHEN THE SHIP COMES HOME.

CHAPTER XI.

By strangers left upon a lonely shore,
Unknown, unhonoured, was the friendless
dead.
For child to weep or widow to deplore
There never came to his unburied head.

Campbell.

CHARLES RUHL gave a start and uttered a cry that was real when the elderly female declared the unhappy suicide to be her missing lodger, Mr. Congreve.

Looking at the ghastly, distorted face and powerful frame, with the memory that Brinsley Congreve was indeed dead to the world upon him, Ruhl could almost fancy that the woman was correct.

There was a strong resemblance between the dead man and Congreve, both in face and figure. The coincidence in the elderly female being so positive as to the identity was less remarkable than it had at first appeared when Charles remembered the little incident of the exchange of coat and hat the night before.

When the poor old lady could be brought to something approaching composure she examined the clothes again, the vest in particular.

It was his, she said. She had braided it with her own hands when it was all frayed out and untidy, and the poor gentleman was so neat and particular that rage made him quite unhappy.

She gave her name as Mrs. Wilkins, widow—Sarah Wilkins, as was well known. The gentleman had come to her four months ago or thereabouts. He had his things there—good linen and a change or two of clothes—but he got poorer and poorer, and they went mysterious like, though of course she couldn't be deceived as to where they did go, and at last there was no more to go. The poor gentleman, who was always quiet and uncomplaining, used to do law copying, but it wasn't often.

"He went on and on downwards until he had not enough food to keep life and soul together," she continued, shedding tears at every pause and making each fullstop a sob. "Then his work fell off and he fell ill. Poor dear soul, he never would ask or borrow food nor money. When he earned a little bit he paid up his rent like the true, honourable gentleman he was. For two whole days he never left his room, and, surprised-like and uneasy, I went in without knocking at the door, for I had a presentiment, as people do sometimes, that something had happened. There I found him laying on the bed, a book by his side, his eyes open, but insensible. He'd neither bite

nor sup the whole of them two days. Heaven forgive them that neglected him! So I cursed him through that illness, for I never would while I'd bite or sup let one so quiet and good die of want. When he got well he did some more copying and raised a few shillings somewhere and paid me and thanked me, with tears in his great eyes, and said I'd been a mother to him. Oh, if Heaven had been so good as to give me such a son he should never, while I had fingers to work with, have wanted as that poor soul did, never!"

Here the poor old lady broke down again, entirely overcome with the memory of the distressing scene. Choking down her sobs, she went on:

"I didn't want to take his few shillings, but he was so proud; so I took 'em and used to send him up a bit of breakfast or tea. Then he used to smile like and say I was a distressing myself for one who was unworthy, and then he'd blame himself and say as how his misfortune was all his own fault, which it never could have been. Then, because I would make him take food when he hadn't any, he took to staying out all day and only a-coming in when I was in bed. I used to put food in his room at them times. But it was only the other day he calls me up and says, 'My dear Mrs. Wilkins, jest as if he was talking to a duchess like, 'I cannot pay you all the rent I owe you, therefore I must insist on your not robbing yourself for me. It is robbery for me to live on your generosity. The meals choke me when I know that I am cheating a widdier woman. If you send up any more I shall even refuse your shelter.' I didn't dare to go and offend him after that, and this is what it's come to. Poor dear, he used to say he wished as how he could go off while dreaming over his book—go off to rest for ever. It was rest he craved for, and he's gone to it now, and Heaven receive his soul and bless him!"

Mrs. Wilkins wept again, and a little stimulant was given to her, then her name and address were taken down and what particulars she could give of him.

"Sir, if you please," she said, when her evidence was ended, "if it ain't against the laws of right, when it's all over and no one comes for them poor, worn clothes, might I humbly beg that the waistcoat might be given to me, to keep in remembrance of one who was the kindest, gentlest, uncomplainingest of honourable gentlemen?"

"No doubt, my dear lady, that simple wish may be granted," she was informed, and Charles Ruhl spoke then.

"I feel sadly convinced," he said, "that Mrs. Wilkins is correct. I knew Mr. Congreve years ago,

and though he is much altered I trace the lineaments of my old friend."

"You will appear at the inquest, sir?"

Ruhl signified that he would and then left the receiving-house with Mrs. Wilkins.

"I shall call and see you," he said, placing a sovereign in her hand. "Take this as an earnest of what I shall present you in return for your very great kindness to my poor lost friend. Poor Congreve! he should never have wanted had he come to me. Good-day, Mrs. Wilkins."

"Good-day, sir," she courtesied to him as he passed gravely on.

He had much strange food for reflection now. Brinsley Congreve was indeed amongst the things of the past. If he existed in John Hartpool it was only as a second self.

"How strangely things work together," Ruhl thought. "Brinsley wanted to wipe out old scores and begin life anew. How a string of coincidences have woven themselves around him to make that past a forgotten page in his life's history, and the future lies before him as if that past had never existed. Marvellous are thy ways, oh, fate!" And with that bit of threadbare philosophy he wandered on in silence, his mind dwelling on other things.

He did not forget the desk and diary for Amy. He purchased them before he went to the café to meet Hartpool. They had time to stop and smoke a cigar over a glass of wine before going on to fetch Ellen.

They had not conversed much in the café, only on the most commonplace topics. Hartpool did three-fourths of the conversation. He was in good spirits to-night. Had the introduction to the tailor been given by a prince he could not have been better treated, he said.

His own light-heartedness and lively humour served to show up all the more and make oppressively noticeable the unusual moody thoughtfulness of his friend Charles, and when they were away from the attentive ears and watchful eyes of the café habitués he asked Ruhl the cause.

"What is the matter, old fellow?" he said. "Touching this sombre air, this deep meditation, why is it thus?"

"Well, shall I take a leaf out of your book and quote Campbell?"

Coming events cast their shadows before. Fate works most industriously in your behalf, my friend. Had you been wiped out of existence and born again in the person of some one else you could not have had a fairer or better start in a new path of life than you have. I looked in at the receiving-

house this morning, and I shouldn't be surprised if you have to follow your own funeral."

"What do you mean?" cried Hartpool, who hated to be talked to in enigmas.

"Patience! When I got there I saw a respectable aged female reading the placard. She was trembling and weeping. Her name was Wilkins; dear Wilkins, widow. Is she strange to you?"

"My good-hearted old landlady," said Hartpool, feeling pale, and a chill of horror slowly coming on, though he scarcely knew why. "Is she?"

"She viewed the body of the dead man. So did I. His remarkably like you, old fellow, strangely so. Mrs. Wilkins carried the coat, vest, and hat, and there was a well, a pleasant, burst of grief. She knew this, she said. 'The watch that belonged to the coat she recognized by the needle in the seam, and the hat by the same thing, as she pointed to the dead man, being a Mr. H. Congreve, a nice, dear gentleman as ever was, and there will be some method in him.'"

"Ruhl, what are you saying? What is the meaning of this? You mean the making of a scene is some absurd comedy. You mean the statement?"

"No," answered Ruhl, a strange smile stealing furtively across his lips. "If things be explanations, they were better left alone. The illness was strange; I never saw anyone so much like my friend Hartpool, so I dropped straight on Congreve and his past, and added my own testimony to that of the respectable elderly female. She was my friend now. All things went together for the good of humanity."

"Do not be impudent, Ruhl!" cried Hartpool sharply, and Charles, glancing at him out of the corner of his eye, saw that the younger gentleman, shocked, and somewhat embarrassed.

"Ruhl, what is your mother-in-law making me this living falsehood—a cheat, meaner, more despicable than the most despicable thing on earth? You must think I am dead to all sense and feeling."

"To think that would be an insult to my own common-sense and perception. My mother-in-law advanced and prosperity. That poor fellow had wandered from other lands to that fatal spot, and I fear will return to his native elements unrecognized, uncared for, except that he has my friend's name, and I perform a friend's sacred duty."

John Hartpool was dull-spirited now. The shadow of the coming events closed over him like a pall, he thought, and he began to regret the step he had taken, to regret that he had not faced the world boldly in his own name, leaving his follies, even if adjudged vices, to be dealt with as the world chose, but atoned for by himself.

Ruhl tried to amuse him with a graphic account of Mrs. Sarah Wilkins's pathetic little tale and affectionate demand for anything as a relic of her esteemed lodger, but Hartpool only felt meaner still, and totally unworthy of the honest-hearted little woman's affection.

"Never mind, old fellow," said Charles, trying by banter to make him either lighter-hearted or else thoroughly out of temper. Hartpool's present state of dull dejection was painfully monotonous. "You won't have to attend the inquest on yourself. The firm will despatch you before then."

"I feel that I would turn my own executioner," responded Hartpool, with a savage snarl.

Ruhl only laughed, and begged him to look a little less like a mute, or Ellen would think they were going to take her to a funeral.

"Even that would be but a mild form of emotion to a man who has looked upon his own corpse," said John, grimly. Then he suddenly burst into a sharp, short laugh, in which he seemed to vent all anomalous feelings. "We will talk over this matter to-night, Ruhl, until then—bah! let us live how we can; for die we must, though I should prefer the straight road."

He was not a man to labour long under a gloom. He had travelled a too rugged path in life, enjoying the smooth, and accepting the ups and downs as inevitable. Virtue is not always safe with such a philosophy as his.

He assumed a false gaiety for Ellen's sake when they met, and during the quiet, pleasant evening at home at Mrs. Temple's it unconsciously became real. Ruhl was brilliant, in full voice; in splendid form for playing, and Ellen shared his enthusiasm. They sang duets, so did she and Hartpool, and when the piano was silent he entertained them with anecdotes of personal experience, and they bore the double charm of being original and well told.

When the ladies had retired to rest the two gentlemen sat over their grog and cigars and held a very grave discussion. Twice John Hartpool lost his temper and there were signs of a storm. Ruhl, cold-blooded and calm, watched him and humoured him, like a man with a terrible hazard at stake.

Daylight poured in upon them and saw Charles, Ruhl a little flushed but still cool, Hartpool was

hot, excited and haggard, the victim of the most violent and conflicting emotions. He was in a desperate state of mind, uncertain, wavering between ambition, that soul-consuming passion for the triumph of an hour, and a virtue which may sometimes mean only apathy, or even insensibility.

He had argued violently before his brother, had turned upon his friend in anger and tested his sentiments and his logic with scorn, had almost refused to hear, and yet, striding about the room, had listened, and while he listened drank deeply, and so the daylight had passed in and saw them part friends for the night at least.

Ruhl had left home before the household had come down to breakfast in the morning. Hartpool was surprised, but signed as though nothing mattered. Ellen made no comment. Anybody that it was not kind of him, to say the least, and then remained silent and sullen. Mrs. Temple only saw in it another proof of his good qualities.

"He is such a dear man for his business," she remarked, smiling. "No doubt he has something important to do, and thought, if he mentioned it, that one of us would get up and make him some breakfast before the morning."

After breakfast the three gentlemen sat at Hartpool's scrap of paper. It was from Charles and contained these words in pencil:

"Either wait for me at the office, or come to my room at five o'clock—O. R."

Hartpool folded the paper and put it in his pocket. He had a habit, good or bad, of keeping every bit of correspondence, and this was his possession. Events of the past week often recalled by its means, and how different they seemed to themselves then to what they did now.

He went to Ruhl's room at last, and found him at "Two O'Clock," and the two sat out in deep conversation. To stop in the House, the old man was out of the question in his present state of mental uneasiness. He took a "bus" to the City and still had time to think of the matter, and then he went to the office, and he returned to his inner man and there spent an hour on the "Business Bankment."

The time to start for Saxon, Coburg and Co. was up then. He arrived at six minutes to the hour. At five precisely Ruhl came out, shook him cordially by the hand, remarking, in a grave, thoughtful way, that they would take a cab, as he had much to say to him.

"I have arranged a little delicate matter for you," he said, when they were being driven rapidly over the loose, shaking macadamized road. "I thought perhaps you would feel shy on the matter. I had no scruples. I drew this on account of your first year's salary"—handing Hartpool a cheque for forty pounds.

"You must buy what is necessary for your bodily comfort and appearance ready-made. The firm wish you to start in two days for Vienna. You will have a pleasant run through Germany, then farther, perhaps—perhaps not."

Ruhl's slow, sapient smile wreathed his lips as he spoke.

Hartpool did not see it. He was feasting his eyes on the cheque, but he caught the tone and knew that the words contained a hidden meaning.

"I can make some parolances to-night," John Hartpool said, at length.

"You had better do so," Ruhl answered.

"But who is going to change the cheque for forty pounds for stranger, dear boy?"

"Oh, I can get that done for you presently."

"I wonder what my friend Charles Ruhl can't do?" said Hartpool, with a reckless kind of laugh, most men of his nature are prone to become reckless with forty pounds unexpectedly showered down upon them.

"Well," answered Ruhl, contemplating his friend by a sidelong glance. "I can't go on being the motive power of a big firm, enriching others by my labours and getting only a meagre salary and a fresher now and then when Coburg feels a little more than usually generous."

"Be careful," laughed Hartpool. "Remember 'Fortune makes fully her peculiar care,' also, my friend, the 'paths of glory lead but to the grave.'"

"So does the path of life," Ruhl muttered, with a gloomy shadow on his brow.

Then he shook himself, as if to throw off his morbid feelings, and, stopping the cab, leapt lightly out.

"Let us walk," he said. "I've got the blues," and he remained in the blues pretty well all the remainder of Hartpool's stay at Kensington.

A cloud seemed lifted from his heart when at last Hartpool, with a hastily purchased wardrobe as hastily packed, left London to begin his new career. He was gone and did not attend his own inquest after all. That did not take place till the second day after his departure. Charles Ruhl and Mrs. Sarah Wilkins were both present.

The coroner and the jury went into the circum-

stances of the case with much patience and good feeling. Ruhl's evidence was taken down. The foreman of the jury regretted that the gentleman who had jumped into the water was not present, but Charles explained that it was impossible, as he was on the Continent.

"We were walking arm-in-arm at the time," he said, "we heard the splash simultaneously; my friend, quicker in his movements than I, leapt into the water. I watched him from the bank. All his efforts were fruitless. He did not see the body. Had his own almost dried by the people at the receiving-house. If any, the deceased, my old friend Congreve, but it is many years since we met; still the face and the figure are the same."

Then came Sarah Wilkins. She related all that she had said at the receiving-house. She could swear to the fact. How did she know of the name in the hat? She had thrown it and put it away when he was ill. He had bought that pair of boots out of the money he got for something he wrote for the papers. Were the boots his? Like his, yes. Side-saddle, single sole. She thought she could swear to them. Could swear to the hat and coat and waistcoat. Could swear that his name was Congreve. It was not for her. Was she sure that was correct? Yes, she was quite sure.

"Brimley Congreve," suggested Ruhl. Ah, yes, that was it! Knew it was something. That was it. He was sure the deceased was his late lodger. Could swear to him. The old novel she had lent him was found in his coat-pocket. Then she recalled his life, his struggle against poverty and hunger, his pain. He would always read and write as if he had the sign of quiet-like one of these days. He had nothing to live for.

"He had nothing to live for?" The question was put by the coroner.

Ruhl answered this question, and then gave a brief account of who he was, and the state of his property and his mother. The coroner and the jury expressed deep sympathy for the deceased, and after a short deliberation returned a verdict of Suicide while in a state of deranged mind.

So, by the laws of the country, Ruhl was allowed to give him decent burial in consecrated ground, paying the expense himself until some one connected with the Congreves should turn up. So the poor fellow was buried, and on a single slab was told to the world that "Here lies Mr. Brimley Congreve, graduate of Edinburgh University, who, bereft of reason by cruel misfortune, died by his own act."

The dates followed, as usual, so that Brimley Congreve's grave, opened and occupied before its time, concealed a fraud and published to the world a falsehood and a blasphemy.

CHAPTER XII.

Pardon what I have spoken, my friend, for I have studied, not present thought, but duty ruminated. Shakespeare.

When the departure of John Hartpool the motive that had induced Ellen to spend more time at home ceased. He had become pleasant change from the dull sameness of their daily life. The old songs and other such pieces for the pianoforte had grown long since stale. Charles had told all his anecdotes, they knew every important or humorous incident in his life, and he had become so much a member of the family as to settle down to their humdrum ways of life. Such companionship as this would alone destroy love's budding blossom.

"I begin to think," Ruhl had said to Mrs. Temple, "that the love which binds two hearts together for life never grows if the two parties live together under the same roof. There is something in the familiarity that is too commonplace to admit of the tender and sublime passion which is poetry itself, and therefore cannot spring from the actual hoised of domestic realities," and Charles Ruhl was right.

Ellen began to show a slowly growing discontent. The evenings at home were so many hours of gaping monotony—everything—conversation, music, and song—all lacked fun. Charles was silently sad, but patient, Ellen restless and fretful. The time was not long coming when she broke out again in her self-willed way.

"What time shall I meet you, princess?" asked Charles, as usual.

"Not at all to-night, thank you, Charles. I am going out with one of the young ladies of the firm. I shall not be late, and she will see me into an omnibus."

"Very well, ladybird," he said, with a patient sigh and a slow smile that faded faintly and then went out, like the rays of an April sun, suddenly cut off by a number, fastening clouds. "I shall be at home."

This was the beginning of Ellen having her own way. She went out and came home when she chose. Charles no longer pressed his company upon her. If

they met it was by accident, if they went out together it was by Ellen's request. Ruhl was determined to let events go their own way.

"You cannot stem the tide," he thought, sadly, "nor change a river's course. I do not want to become a fatalist, but I fancy that what is to be will be."

But Mrs. Temple took a different view of the case. A stern sense of duty, a mother's duty, made stronger by a mother's love and fear for her child's welfare, made her take prompt action in the matter. She went to the firm and spoke to one of the lady principals, not hiding a single truth, however unpleasant that truth was.

"Either my daughter must stay in the house," she said, "or some one who has power over her must use some influence, or she will be lost."

The lady principal felt considerably shocked. To her Ellen had seemed all that was proper, pure and refined. She promised to exert her influence, and she did.

She sought Ellen, and suggested to her that since her services had been so valuable it was thought necessary that she should board and lodge in the house.

The gravity of her tone, the suddenness of this change, told Ellen that something had happened.

"My mother has been here," she almost involuntarily exclaimed.

The lady principal confessed she had, and then read Ellen a mild lecture.

"My dear madam," answered Ellen, with a calm dignity that did honour to the family from which she sprang, "not for a moment forgetting the kindly interest you have taken in me since I have had the honour of serving you, not—and I hope you will think so—wishing to show any ingratitude for all that you have done for me, still I must now and for good let you see that I distinctly put my foot down against any attempt at control over my actions as an independent person when I leave here. As to staying in the house, it means a mild form of bondage, to which I never will consent. Drudgery I don't mind; captivity I do. If that is the choice on which I am to remain I would rather at once submit my resignation."

"Very well, Miss Temple; it must be so. A decisive step one way or the other is necessary for your own sake—for the firm's sake. If you should have to suffer wrongs or scandal you must bear it, but this firm cannot be made the theme of public gossip."

Ellen coloured to the roots of her hair.

"Madam—"

"We need not pursue the discussion, Miss Temple. I am simply sorry that you should your ears to the advice of those older and more experienced than yourself. I shall be sorry—so will others here—to lose you, for I like and respect you, and so do they. I wonder that a lady of your abilities and education has not more self-esteem."

She turned away as she spoke, and Ellen, stricken down, angered, mortified and choking with grief, home. There she gave vent to her rage and shame in a burst of tears, and when they were checked there was a scene.

"You have lost me my position!" she said, angrily, her eyes flashing fire upon her mother. "Now I hope you are satisfied. Who will keep me now?"

"I will, if you will consent to let me," said Charles Ruhl, entering the room and speaking very tenderly.

"Respect our privacy and our domestic quarrels, if you please, Mr. Ruhl. Your conspiracy has quite failed in effecting its purpose. I blush for my mother, and I despise you. I am turned away as if I were the vilest creature on earth!"

"You are not speaking the truth, Ellen," said Mrs. Temple, calmly, "your anger makes you forget yourself. If you leave, it will be by your own free will. You will not leave the firm in disgrace, but to prevent disgrace. I would much rather have you at home with me, Ellen."

"Yes, to be an ill-dressed drudge, or a panshioner on Charles Ruhl! He is to bear the burden of this house upon his shoulders, he is not, and what is to be the return? Is he its master, and the master of me? You would barter me like a sheep or a horse, and this from the wife of a Temple, whose crest has ever been without a blemish! Die, if on you! Oh, Charles, I had admired you for being more of a man than this; I had loved you with quite a sisterly love, because I thought you worthy of being a friend and a brother to me."

"Ellen," said Charles Ruhl, huskily and with trembling lips, "a word more in that strain and I leave this house for ever. You accuse me of having the burden—by which I presume you mean the expense—of this house on my shoulders. That is unjust, untrue. Since I commenced my career in England, many, many years ago, I have never known the com-

fort of a female companion or friend. I have been a homeless, lonely unknown. Deprived of the blessing of a parent's friends, a stranger to the shelter of a homely roof, desolate in this great city, desolate as the winds that sweep the seas; always craving for quiet and the peace of a home, my heart yearning for a gentler companionship than that of men, who change with their circumstances and every change of place. I have found refuge from desponding loneliness in years of incessant labour, with but one purpose in view—that purpose to find or create a peaceful home, some one to share it with me and lighten the cares of life, for life alone brings its own cares. The home I found at last—a happy, contented resting-place, where tender faces and gentle words made every hour spent in it sweet to me. That home is here. How little have I contributed towards its comforts! How poorly, how meanly have I repaid your dear, kind mamma for the long term of happiness and peace she has afforded me!"

His voice grew subdued and tearful, and the pale lips quivered. But his heart alone wept.

"I had hoped at first that I had found the companion that my soul yearned for. But it is not to be. From to-night I ask you to be my friend, my sister. From to-night I ask mamma to let me keep a corner in the old home, that I may return when my toilsome journeys are done, that I may feel the tranquil pleasure of knowing that there is a home, a hallowed place to me, where I can retire and rest. I shall travel again for the firm, and so relieve you of my presence, and perhaps in time I may conquer this love, stifle it down as something that must not—shall not exist, for—for your sake, Ellen! For—your—sake."

His voice broke down then, two large hot tears stood trembling on his white cheeks, and before he could dash them away there was a cry, and Amy, the impetuous, had flown into his arms.

"Charles, Charles," she said, as if her little heart would burst, "don't take on so! Don't, dear, dear Charles! oh, it was cruel of her—cruel, cruel; but you shall be rewarded some day. Oh, mamma, tell him that there is a place in your home for him always! Charles, so good, so kind, and patient—patient with me and with Ellen too, and who does work hard to teach and improve me. I'll never be obstinate nor naughty again, indeed I won't!"

The outburst was over, and she sobbed aloud.

"Little pet sister," said Charles, drawing her to his side, and stooping to kiss her. Then he held one of her plump brown hands, and placed his own on her soft flowing hair.

Few things strike home to a woman so much as to see a man in tears. Ellen was deeply affected. Her heart melted at once.

"Oh, Charles, I can't see you like that," she said, gliding in front of him, and wiping his damp face with her tiny scented handkerchief. "I never meant what I said. Forgive me, dear Charles!"

But he could not speak. The little tender act she had committed to console him did what his own heart-wrung grief could not do. It broke him down at once, and his strong frame shook as he sank into a chair and laid his head on Amy's shoulder.

"Oh, Charles," said Ellen, sorrowfully, "why was I ever born to cause you so much suffering? If I have injured your sensitive heart, you have humbled me. Believe this, Charles; that the house never would be the same without you—never!"

"For my part," said Mrs. Temple, in simple earnestness, "I, who have never known a son's love and protection, cannot look upon you, Charles, as aught else, and believe me when I say that while it pleases Heaven to give me the blessing of this home there shall be a place for you, my dear Charles. Ay, though you come back to me barefoot, with the world's scorn heaped upon your head—ay, a hunted felon, red-handed, with the blood of your pursuers upon them—though all this should be, Charles, there is a place for you here in my heart, and shelter in my home, so help me Heaven!"

Mrs. Temple's voice had become wondrously impressive in its intensity as she concluded. Ellen turned upon her in surprise. Amy simply exclaimed, in her rapturously impulsive way:

"I knew it! I knew it!"

"Always, always," murmured Ellen. "You will forgive me, Charles, for wounding your feelings. I will try and be all you ask, all you seek: I will indeed."

"Heaven bless you, Ellen," he cried, starting up, and clasping her in his arms, he imprinted a burning kiss upon her brow, and, with one hand to his head, hurried from the room.

There was a great change in Ellen after that night. She had made up her mind to try and reconcile herself to Charles Ruhl. She felt somehow that his firm and patient self-sacrificing love alone entitled him to her. Then, again, she more than liked him. Would not the rest come? She thought

it would, and accepted her fate with a gentle resignation not without its pathos.

With this purpose in view, she wrote to Hopetown, told him as much as she could without going into domestic privacies—told him that they must not see each other again. It would be best that they should not, she wrote. But, for both their sakes, she regretted having to add that their clandestine meetings had come to the ears of the firm, and that any letter sent by him would possibly be intercepted.

"Good-bye for ever," as the letter concluded, "my kind and generous friend, whose honour, integrity and tenderness will for ever live in the memory of one whose ambition is gone, whose glorious day-dreams must be renounced, if not forgotten; with nothing to lighten the perhaps dreary future but the memory of the one peep into paradise afforded her by a true and honourable friendship, which by the harsh dictates of worldly duties must be torn asunder. Farewell!"

How often she read that dirge to the broken dreams of her future. How she carried it about a whole day and night half-undecided. How, at last, with a desperate effort only, she thrust it into the letter-box, and left it to go its rapid way and sever the tie of friendship which had given her, as she had said, a peep into a paradise that she could never hope to see again.

She never for a moment dreamt that her letter, a strange mixture of womanly, matter-of-fact common sense, calm judgment, and at the last poetry, tender passion and affectionate regret, would have any other effect than the one she sought.

The day passed and in the evening Ellen went home, with Charles. Next day, and no letter from Hopetown. He too had perhaps thought it best that they should not meet again. She sighed a little disappointedly, but withal glad the pang was over, the infatuation nothing but a dream now.

Wait! In the afternoon she was commissioned to call on a lady of high rank, who, as most ladies are, was greatly dissatisfied with her dress. Ellen was the most competent to deal with this fastidious lady and so she went.

A hundred yards away and out of sight of the firm a man stood before her. She was dimly conscious of having seen him before when she looked at him again. His "out" was that of a groom. A brief struggle with memory and then his identity flashed upon her. He was Francis Hopetown's coachman.

He touched the brim of his hat civilly, and took from his breast-pocket something wrapped up in tissue paper.

The something was a letter.

"I've been a waiting, miss, on and off ever since eleven this morning. I thought you'd be out some time. I'm very glad I've seen you, miss, and hope you'll not be offended with me for stopping you."

"You are very, very kind," said Ellen, feeling for her purse. "I don't know how I can reward so much—"

"Thankee, miss, please don't trouble; master wouldn't never forgive me if I was to take anything. Thankee, miss; I've done my duty and I'll cut back to master now."

And, touching his hat again, he surreptitiously drew from his pocket a flaming cigar which he had secured at sight of Ellen, at the risk of setting himself on fire.

Ellen was surprised and amused with the man's quaintness. She little thought that his fair, boyish master had confronted him that morning with a stern, white face, with no other poetry left in it but the poetry of agony.

"Go," he had said, "here" (giving the address) "and wait till you see a lady, the lady you saw with me in the park and whom you drove to Richmond."

The man signified that he knew whom he meant well.

"You will either see this lady going in or coming out," continued his master. "Make haste there, and if you lose sight of the place till one hour after it closes, don't come back to me, understand that, and you know how far I mean a thing. Succeeded in conveying that letter into her hands only, and out of sight of the establishment, and you shall have a couple of sovereigns on your return. Mention no names and don't stop to take a present from the lady; don't forget that or I'll shake you out of your shoes."

As we have seen, Hopetown's confidential servant did not forget that. He had a wholesome horror, in spite of his hardy strength, of Hopetown's college training, and apart from that he possessed a sentimental affection for his young master, whom he had taught to ride as a child.

Ellen did the very wisest thing she could do with the two-shilling-piece she had taken out for the messenger. She hailed a passing cab, told the man to drive slowly to the address of the fastidious lady,

and, tearing open the envelope, read Hopetown's letter with a beating heart.

"My dear Miss Temple," it ran. "No. I cannot address you thus formally, until I see you again it must be, as before, my dear, my more than dear Ellen. With what emotion I received your letter I cannot call to my aid language sufficiently expressive to describe. Had a thunderbolt descended at my feet, had news suddenly reached me that I was beggared for ever, had my poor dead cousin's shadow stood before me, had one or all these occurred I might have borne them with more fortitude than I did your letter. Part for ever! renounce you! The shock, so sudden and unexpected, would be too great to bear. No, you must see me again. If the tie of our sweet friendship must be broken, I implore that it may be broken more gently. To-night I will wait near your establishment; if you are late or engaged I will leave quietly and be at my post again to-morrow night. Oh, you will see me once more, will you not? You owe me this much. Think of my suffering, my love, and my unhappy helplessness, and be merciful."

What was Ellen to do with her idol after he had written such an appeal as this? What most other young ladies would have done had they been in her place. Send him a little pencilled note, saying that she would see him once more, but that they both must prepare to bear the separation.

She did not expect to see him this evening, Charles having arranged to come for her. But circumstances combined to hasten her fate. Charles was not there when she left the firm and did not arrive until half an hour later.

Hopetown had seen her come out alone and was at her side in a moment.

Ellen's heart gave a wild leap and the blood rushed to her head. She saw at a glance that he was pale and haggard. There was a sorrowful light in his eyes and he looked as only the grief-stricken can look.

"Ellen," he said, "you will spare me ten minutes?"

"Yes," she answered, faintly, and a little confused.

He led her away out of the noise and traffic of the main thoroughfare into a quiet bye-street. His carriage was there, so was the man who had brought her the letter, but he had eyes only for the horses' ears.

"We cannot talk in the street," Hopetown said; "let us drive a little way."

Ellen hesitated. She had nerved herself to go through a calm explanation and bid him farewell. She feared to trust herself with him too long. But he placed her in the carriage while she was thinking, and, stepping in after her, the coachman drove on.

Regret came then, but it came too late.

Ellen looked at him hopelessly; his white, sorrowful face touched her deeply.

"Oh, Frank!" she cried, tearfully, "I wish I had not come."

He made no answer, nor movement, nor sigh, but sat as if he had been suddenly stricken by a blight or petrified into stone.

(To be continued.)

EDITH'S STRATAGEM.

"Now, guardie, I'll leave it to yourself if that is fair! I've been away at boarding-school, poked up with a regiment of books, and now, when I come home with full honours—just to please you—you want to get rid of me! When I have only had a good time for two months you want to marry me to some great bear of a man, just because his father and my father requested it! Now I say I shan't do it! Papa never intended I should marry any one I didn't love, and I'm not going to either!"

And the little beauty stamped her foot, and darted angry glances at a rheumatic old gentleman in an arm-chair.

"Well, see here, Miss Edith; your father wanted you to marry George Forbes, and you shall marry him, or I'll—"

"You'll what? I you dare to be cross to me I won't love you any more, and—and I'll run away!"

"Run ahead, miss! You won't find it so pleasant as you imagine."

"Won't you kiss me and forgive me before I go?"

And Edith put two soft arms around the old man's neck and kissed him.

"There, there, you little coxer, run to your room and get over this pet of yours, and then I'll talk to you."

The old man wiped away a tear as pretty Edith closed the door after her.

"The dear little thing! If I were not so old I'd mar—what am I talking about? I must see her married to George Forbes, as I promised her father."

Edith went to her room, and threw herself in her favourite arm-chair; but ease did not help her.

She took up a paper that was lying near, and began to peruse its contents, when she saw something that made her eyes sparkle with merriment, and a mischievous smile gather around her mouth.

"I'll do it! I'll see if he is as good as guardie says he is!"

And, drawing up her desk, she took out her writing materials and wrote two letters, one to her guardian, and the other she addressed to "Mrs. B. A., Fairfield."

Three days after Edith was missing, while a note addressed to her guardian was found on her desk. It read as follows:

"YOU DEAR, DEAR GUARDIE.—You must forgive me, but I am going on a little trip. Don't be alarmed. If I don't like it I'll come back. You told me I could run away, so I thought I would, just for fun. Now don't be worried, as I shall come back all right."

"Your loving ward,
"EDITH."

"Don't be worried!" But he was worried, and the servants knew it; all they could do would not please him.

Every effort was made to find Edith, but to no avail, and Mr. Graham finally gave up the search, and awaited her coming as promised.

"George, I expect the arrival of a governess this afternoon, for Lily and May; will you go to the train and meet her?"

"How shall I know the lady?"

"She will expect you, as I described you to her. Her name is Miss Lawrance."

"Very kind of you—but I'll go."

And George swung the aforesaid Lily over his head, and brought her down again as gently as though she were an infant, and did not get tossed up in that style by Uncle George every day.

"Do you want to go?"

"I do. Can I, mamma?"

"If Uncle George wants you."

"Well, get her ready; it is about time to start."

Perhaps the lady will enjoy the ride better with Lily than if she were alone with a great burly fellow like me."

"Great burly fellow like you?"

And Mrs. Alphonse looked proudly at her brother, who to her was perfection.

Lily was soon ready, and they drove down the road and arrived at the station in time to hear the whistle and see the engine come steaming up the line.

"Fairfield," shouted the porters, and a crowd soon gathered on the steps and alighted on the platform.

All seemed to have friends, and George gave up looking for the governess, when some one touched him lightly on the shoulder and said:

"Are you the gentleman from Mrs. Alphonse?"

"I am," said George, as he gazed in admiration on the little, black-eyed lady who addressed him.

"I suppose you are Miss Lawrance."

"Yes, sir—the governess Mrs. Alphonse advertised for. Is this one of my future pupils?" and she took Lily's hand. "I hope we will be the best of friends."

"It's very easy to make friends with Lily," said George, as he handed them into the carriage.

They were soon home, and the introductions gone through with, Miss Lawrance, accompanied by Lily and May, went to her room to prepare for tea.

"You have a lovely home here; don't you like to live in the country?"

"Yes. Uncle George says it's awful to live in the city."

"Well, it's not as pleasant. Have you any pets?"

"Yes; Uncle George brought me a rabbit," said May.

"And I have Nero; he's a splendid dog; we play together—he and I," said Lily; "and then we have Tabby—that's the cat—and one of the kittens is mine and one is May's."

"That is nice; I am very fond of pets."

The bell rang, and they descended to the dining-room, where Miss Lawrance was introduced to Mr. Alphonse.

After tea Miss Lawrance went with May and Lily to see the pets. It was hard to tell which was the happier, Miss Lawrance or the children; a child she appeared when with them, but, as soon as she entered the parlour, she was the stately governess again.

The next day the duties of Miss Lawrance began; and while she found some stumbling-blocks the love between teacher and pupils overcame them, and they learned rapidly.

"What do you think of the governess, George?" asked Mrs. Alphonse, after Miss Lawrance had been with her a month.

"I think she is the most bewitching little mortal I ever saw; I hear her laughing with the children, but when I make my appearance she draws herself in like a turtle in its shell, and becomes as stately as a queen."

"Look out, George! Don't lose your heart. You know you are engaged."

"Engaged to a girl whom I never saw—and never want to! I think her father—and mine also—must have taken leave of their senses when they made the engagement between us."

"But surely, George, you will go and see Miss Carlton, will you not?"

"Yes, I will, after I have asked Miss Lawrance to marry me; if she says 'Yes' I will go and tell Miss Carlton how I stand, and, if she has any sense, she will not care to marry one who has not even seen her. If Miss Lawrance says 'No' then I don't care when I marry, or whom."

"George, I am afraid you have done wrong in not going to see her before, and—"

"Oh, mamma! Come quick!" said Lily, running in, out of breath. "Miss Lawrance went to get some apples off the tree, and she fell down, and looks just as if she is dead!"

George ran to the spot and found Edith insensible.

He raised her, and, carrying her into the house, gently laid her on the sofa.

It was some time before she recovered consciousness; her arm was broken, and in trying to rise she faints.

The broken limb was properly attended to, but she was a prisoner for three weeks. Very gentle nurses did she have during her illness; but at the earliest stage of convalescence she requested Mrs. Alphonse to release her from her engagement, as she wished to return.

Mrs. Alphonse was very sorry to lose her, and begged her, when fully recovered, to return. She packed her trunk, and was to start the following morning.

It was evening, and Edith went with Lily and May to look at her favourite spot for the last time; they sat down in their old seats in the arbour, and were so interested in their conversation that they did not see a form behind the heavy foliage, or the black eyes that were watching them.

George had gone to look for Edith, and arrived in time to see such a pleasant picture that he sat where they could not see him, in watchful silence.

"And you love as ever so much?" asked Lily.

"Yes, very much."

"And you will come back again some day?" said May.

"Perhaps I will."

"Don't you love papa and mamma ever so much?" asked Lily.

"Yes, indeed; I think you have the nicest papa and mamma! It makes me wish I had parents, too."

"And Uncle George, too—you must love him better than mamma and papa, because he hasn't got any little girls. Don't you love him ever so much?"

"Yes; I'll love him ever so much because you want me to."

"No, not because I want you to, but because he's so good; don't you think he is?"

"Yes—he is good. But don't you think it is time to go in? The dew is falling."

"I think it is, you little runaways! You must go in, for mamma wants you," said George, at this moment.

They arose, and all entered the house together.

"Miss Edith, will you please step into the drawing-room? I want to speak to you," said George to Edith.

They entered, and he led her to a seat.

"Edith, you already know what I wish to say to you; it is needless for me to tell you how much I love you; am I right in feeling my love is reciprocated? Speak—tell me! You are going away to-morrow, and I must know my fate."

He took her hand; she did not pull it away, and this gave him courage. Drawing her head on his shoulder, he said:

"Your answer is yes, is it not?"

She raised her head, and said:

"You are free, George, to make this declaration?"

"Yes, I am; nothing but Heaven has a right to join two hearts together. You have heard of this hated engagement, then?"

"Yes."

"From whom?"

"I will tell you some other time. Go see this young lady, and tell her you love another; if she release you, come to me; I will then give you your answer—not till then."

"You do love me?"

"I do."

"And you will become mine when I am free?"

"You are not free yet."

"But I will be—and then you will be mine for ever. Where can I find you?"

"I will let you know as soon as you see this lady. Come, your sister will wonder where we are."

He offered her his arm, and they entered the parlour.

The next day Miss Lawrance returned to the

city, and George prepared to go and see Miss Carlton.

Mr. Graham sat in his arm-chair, very moody indeed. Edith had been gone two months, and not a line had he received from her in all that time. He wondered where she was.

"If you please, Mr. Graham, there is a lady in the parlour who wishes to see you."

"All right; I'll come when I get ready. Who is she?"

"She did not give her name." The man-servant stepped forward and whispered, "I think she brings news of Miss Edith."

Mr. Graham jumped up, regardless of his rheumatism, and went to the parlour quicker than ever before. As he entered, a pair of loving arms were thrown around his neck, and a pair of cherry lips met his.

"You dear guardie! Did I frighten you? Well, I know I am very wicked, but I couldn't help it. I had such a pleasant time! I have been a governess, and I wouldn't have come home for a long time if I had not wanted to see you. I broke my arm, and I had a good excuse to come home, and I won't leave you again."

Mr. Graham was too much overcome by joy to answer. Edith led him to a chair, and took her place on an ottoman at his feet.

"I want to confess now, guardie; are you ready?"

He nodded in assent.

"Well, you see you said I must marry George Forbes."

"You needn't my dear, if you don't want to. But it was your father's wish; and I ought to follow out his desires."

"I needn't marry him?"

"No."

"And you'll tell him so?"

"Yes; I'll turn him out of the house, if you wish."

"No, don't do that, but tell him Miss Carlton does not care to marry him; then send him into the parlour, so that I can see him."

"Perhaps you will like the young man. It would make me very happy to have the marriage take place."

"Well, I'll see! but you'll tell him I don't want to marry, will you?"

"Yes, yes—of course I will. There is the teabell. Go and get ready; I shall have a good appetite to-night, now my sunbeam's returned."

The next day Mr. Graham was summoned to the parlour to see Mr. George Forbes. Kindly taking the young man's hand, he said:

"I am sorry for you, young man, but Miss Carlton says she will not marry you. I am very sorry, as this marriage was desired by your parents."

"I am thankful, sir, as I came to tell Miss Carlton that I love another, and I know that in that case she would not wish to marry me, even if it was our parents' wish."

"You must see her; I will send her down."

"Thank you—I should be pleased to do so."

Mr. Graham bowed himself out, and George had turned to look at a picture when he heard his name called, and looked around to see Miss Lawrence standing beside him.

"You here?"

"Yes, George; forgive me for deceiving you; I am Edith Lawrence Carlton."

We will draw the curtain for a short time, until, like Mr. Graham, we get impatient, and enter the parlour with him.

"What is the meaning of this?" said he, as he spied the pair on a sofa, talking very coolly.

"Oh, guardie, please come here! I didn't confess yesterday, and I want to now. The day you told me I must marry George I went up to my room, determined not to do so. I picked up a paper, and saw an advertisement for a governess at Fairfield. I knew that was where George lived and thought I should get a chance to hear if he was as good as you said. I answered the advertisement, and was accepted; and when I arrived there I found, to my surprise, that my employer was George's sister. I was with her for seven weeks, and I have changed my mind about marrying. I think, as you so much wish it, I will marry George—if he is willing."

It is needless to say that he was, and three months after the governess was welcomed at Fairfield, not as Miss Lawrence, but as dear Aunt Edith.

Mr. Graham died soon after, but not till he said he had done as he promised; and Edith never regretted acting as governess for seven weeks, as she said she not only enjoyed it but received a larger reward than she expected.

L. J.

ONE of the most ancient historians of Scotland says of the blooming heather with which most of the highland hills are covered that it affords food for all kinds of cattle, for various species of wild

fowl, and especially for bees, who sip its purple dew, so that the London caterers for the palace describe their finest honey as the "heather honey," that the Picts who overran the land at a remote period made excellent beer, but not having left their recipe, the beer has gone into disuse.

The British consul at Calais has just reported to the English Foreign Office that an old lady died at St. Pierre-lez-Calais, in 1870, of the undoubted age of 101 years and nine months. Her identity, independent of the register, happens to be singularly easy of proof, for she was a curiosity in her way, and not one whose history and antecedents were unknown. She, already a mother, together with her husband, was awaiting her fate by the guillotine in prison in Paris in 1794, and probably escaped death only by the fall of Robespierre.

EXPECTATIONS.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE cry of Mrs. Malverne that Charlot Lyle was dead was to Charles Vernon like a trumpet-peal announcing victory. In an instant, before the smoke of the detonation powders had vanished from the air, he had leaped his horse forward, had sprung from his saddle, and was bending over the girl, with glittering eyes and sallow face glowing with evil triumph.

Miss Lyle had been thrown against a pile of stones with considerable violence. The place for the catastrophe had been indeed well chosen by the villainous confederates. The girl's hat had fallen from her head, her yellow hair was half-unbound, her face was ghastly white, and her eyes were closed. Surely she was dead.

Vernon's soul thrilled with a mad jubilation. Only a dying man stood now between him and the owner of Waldgrove Castle! Another step, and he would be the owner of all the Trebasil wealth!

"Charlot!" he called out, sharply, as the remainder of the party gathered around and dismounted. "Cousin Charlot! speak to me! Oh, Heaven! she is dead! Charlot—"

The azure eyes opened slowly upon him in an expression of surprise and pain. The pale face flushed a little under his strange, wild gaze, and then Charlot Lyle struggled to her elbow and slowly gathered herself up into a sitting position.

Not dead! Not even mortally injured! Charles Vernon started back, livid to the lips.

Joliette Stair rushed forward to the support of her friend, and assisted Charlot to her feet.

"Where are you hurt, dear?" demanded Joliette, in her quick, impulsive way.

"I—I fell on my arm," said Miss Lyle, trembling.

"I think it is broken. I am not otherwise injured!"

"It is Heaven's mercy that you were not killed!" cried Joliette. "What if your head had struck those stones?"

"Strange that an accident should happen just here!" said Mrs. Malverne. "Who flung those explosive things, and why did he do it? One could almost think it had been done for the very purpose of frightening our horses and causing an accident."

She peered sharply, as she spoke, into the dusky wood bordering the road.

One of the grooms had galloped on at full speed in pursuit of Miss Lyle's runaway horse. The other groom was holding the still-frightened steeds of the young ladies and Vernon.

Mrs. Malverne walked up to the pailings bordering the highway, and looked over in quest of the person who had thrown the explosive powders, but no one was visible in the dusky shade. Gannard, who had been the author of the catastrophe, had not waited to learn the result of his wicked exploit, but had discreetly vanished.

Vernon drew his breath quick and hard. His face was livid still; his eyes had a glare of rage in them. He had the look of a tiger who had been cheated of his prey. Baulked in the very moment of supposed success! The girl had escaped his toils by a miracle. He looked down upon her with a baffled, hungry hatred that longed to consume her.

"I see no one in the wood here," continued Mrs. Malverne. "The affair looks mysterious, does it not, Mr. Vernon?"

Vernon forced a jarring laugh.

"I see no mystery in it," he observed. "Some country urchin must have been amusing himself at this lonely point of the road with those Chinese detonating powders, and we came along just in time to get the full benefit of his exercises. Poor little fellow! No doubt he has fled in terror, having seen our disaster."

"But," persisted Mrs. Malverne, "is it not strange that a country urchin should possess a detonating powder?"

"Not any more strange than a thousand things that happen every day. It is simply a forerunner of

Gay Fawkes' day. Such things are common enough then and on fête days," said Vernon, regaining command of himself by a stern and powerful effort. "But why do we stand here and discuss a matter which is apparent at a glance, when my poor cousin needs attention?"

He turned towards Miss Lyle a countenance seemingly marked with the utmost anxiety and affection for her.

Joliette was still supporting the injured girl, who had quite recovered her self-possession.

"There is nothing the matter with me, except that my arm is broken, Cousin Charles," said Charlot, endeavouring bravely to conceal the fact that she was suffering intense pain. "The groom has not secured my horse, and indeed I do not think I could ride. Do not let me detain you all here. Ride on to the abbey. There is a cottage near here. I will walk on and wait there until you can send a carriage for me."

"Miss Lyle is right," said Mrs. Malverne, growing tired of a scene in which she was not the principal object of attention. "She seems able to walk to the cottage. Let us mount and ride on to the abbey, and send the carriage for her."

With an imperious little gesture she summoned Vernon to her side, and, availing herself of his assistance, mounted her horse.

"I shall walk with Charlot," said Joliette. "Lean on me, dear."

Vernon walked at the side of his cousin, seemingly tenderly solicitous about her. Joliette drew Charlot's uninjured arm in one of her own, and Mrs. Malverne rode slowly beside them, the groom bringing up the rear with the horses.

Ten minutes' walk brought the party to the cottage of a woodman, which was nearly hidden in trees and conveniently near the roadside. The exterior of the cottage was extremely picturesque; the interior proved to be exquisitely clean. The woodman's wife, a kindly woman of middle age, placed a wooden settle in the bright and cool little kitchen at Miss Lyle's disposal, and Joliette, sending Vernon and Mrs. Malverne on to the abbey, remained with her friend.

In the course of half an hour the abbey barouche, containing pillows and rugs in profusion, flasks of stimulating liquors, and hot-water bottles in variety, all in charge of good Mrs. Bittle, arrived at the cottage. Miss Lyle was transferred to the carriage and transported to the abbey. A surgeon had been already sent for, and he arrived from Langworth a couple of hours later, before which time a more humble practitioner from Trebasil village had set Miss Lyle's broken arm. Vernon waited at the abbey in an apparently insupportable anxiety to hear the surgeon's verdict. It may be imagined with what outward relief and delight—and what inward chagrin—he heard that Miss Lyle had sustained no internal injury whatever, and that the fracture of the arm she had sustained was of the simplest possible character.

"There is not the slightest occasion for anxiety, my dear sir," said the worthy old Langworth surgeon, desirous of alleviating Vernon's supposed anxieties. "The young lady—she is your cousin, I understand—will wear her arm in a sling for a few weeks, but, if she be careful, need suffer little further inconvenience. It is almost a miracle that she escaped with her life."

Vernon assented, expressing his fervent gratitude for her escape from death, the while bitterest regrets formed his thoughts.

Madame Falconer sympathized with Vernon's supposed distress, bestowed upon him considerable polite attention, and invited him to visit the abbey at his pleasure, declaring that he would always be welcome. She invited him to remain to luncheon, and he accepted the invitation, exerting himself to strengthen the good impression he had made upon her.

Soon after luncheon Vernon remounted and rode to the "Barley Mow" inn.

It is not here necessary to recount the particulars of the interview that succeeded his return between him and his valet. Baulked they might be in their wicked designs, but they were not discouraged. They had not attained the easy victory they had expected, but new opportunities could be readily made. They had been twice defeated; Vernon said grimly that the third attempt would be successful.

"You'll have to exercise a little patience, sir," said the valet. "It won't do to have an accident happen to the young lady every time you take her out. Let matters rest awhile. There's time enough. Too much haste is sure to spoil matters."

Acting upon this suggestion, Vernon paid daily visits to Blair Abbey, and like the lurking spider bided his time.

In the course of a week Charlot Lyle made her appearance in the drawing-room, her injured arm

supported in a broad blue ribbon sling, her face paler than usual, but its sweetness all unmarred by the shadow of a suspicion that the supposed accident from which she suffered was the result of the machinations of a secret and powerful enemy.

Adrian Rossett had returned to the abbey, and Vernon assiduously cultivated Rossett's friendship. The schemer was not one to neglect any opportunity to further his own interests. He saw that Rossett was in high favour at the abbey, and presently suspected that Madame Falconer's godson was Charlot Lyle's lover.

One cheerless autumnal afternoon, when the dead leaves were falling from the trees before the fitful gusts of wind, Joliette Stair and Charlot Lyle, well wrapped in furs, and attended by Vernon, walked slowly up and down the grand and winding avenue.

Madame Falconer, seated in the state drawing-room, watched them from the wide French window. The aged lady was attired in a long black velvet dress and wore ornaments set with burning rubies. Her yellow, sardonic face wore a wistful expression, and her keen, malicious eyes, peering out from beneath her beetling white brows, had something sad and yearning in their black depths.

Adrian Rossett and Mrs. Helena Malverne were near her, the latter lounging in a chair, the former standing near and looking out also upon the pedestrians.

"I wonder what Charles Vernon comes to the abbey for every day?" said Mrs. Malverne, thoughtfully. "Is he in love with his cousin or with Miss Stair?"

"With neither," said the humpbacked mistress of the abbey, with acerbity. "Your mind runs upon love matters as much as ever, I see, Helena. Mr. Vernon is one of those young gentlemen, so plentiful in these days, who have nothing to do. He has no home, no profession. You heard him say that his physician had ordered him to the country, and that the vicinity of his mother's early home was the pleasantest spot to him in all England! I have made him welcome to the abbey for his mother's sake. I knew and liked her. Miss Lyle is his cousin, and a cousin is next to a sister. I am sure I don't object to his coming. The worst I know of him is that he is cousin to Sir Mark Trebail."

"You used to like Sir Mark. Why do you dislike him now?" demanded Mrs. Malverne, quickly.

Rossett interposed at this juncture, but without apparent design.

"I think I will join the walking party," he remarked, "if you will kindly excuse me, Madame Falconer."

With a bow he departed.

"Is Adrian Rossett Miss Stair's lover also?" inquired the young widow, the current of her thoughts momentarily diverted by the movement of the young gentleman.

"He is Miss Lyle's lover," replied the keen-eyed octogenarian. "Have you not seen that, Helena?"

"I confess I had not. I supposed that you intended to unite your godchildren," remarked Mrs. Malverne, with a constrained laugh. "Adrian is rich; Miss Stair will be still wealthier. I really thought it was your plan to marry Miss Joliette to Adrian."

"You have mistaken my purpose," said Madame Falconer, coldly.

"Then I suppose Miss Stair will marry Vernon? Any one can see that he fairly worships her. And you would allow Adrian to throw himself away upon your companion, a penniless girl who is dependent upon your bounty. I can scarcely realize it."

"Charlot Lyle is a Trebail on her mother's side, and is consequently well connected. She is good and pretty. Adrian might do worse. I quite approve his choice. There is no engagement between him and Charlot, and I am sure that he has not yet declared himself to her. All that will come in due course of time."

"Sir Mark Trebail used to be a great favourite of yours," said the young widow. "Why is it that you dislike him now? I remember that you were eager years ago to bring about a match between him and me. Has he become dissipated?"

"No, I think his habits remain unchanged. As to the change in my opinions concerning him, I decline to be called to account, Helena."

Mrs. Malverne's face reddened with suppressed anger, but she replied, with assumed meekness:

"I suppose I have forfeited all right to your confidence, dear Madame Falconer. It is my own fault. I have only myself to blame for it, but it is none the less bitter. I remember how you once liked Sir Mark Trebail, and I was anxious to learn why he had forfeited your good opinion. I always liked him, and the young widow's tone grew plaintive. "I found when I had married Alfred that I thought altogether too much of Sir Mark. I think I might have won him but for my mad folly. Is there any

reason why I should not win him now? If he returns home, dear friend, and become my suitor, will you not consent to my marriage with him?"

The gushing manner of her former ward disgusted Madame Falconer. *And what interest could I have?*

"I have no objection to your winning him, if you can," she answered, promptly. "I don't think he ever cared for you, and I doubt your ability to win him. But, such as he is, if you can win him, you have my consent to your marriage with him."

Mrs. Malverne was keen enough to detect mental reservations in the visage and manner of her hostess. "Would you have returned that answer to your new protégée, if Miss Stair had asked that question?" Mrs. Malverne demanded, reproachfully.

"Joliette is not capable of asking my consent to her marriage with a man whom she had not seen for years, and who never entertained a fancy for her."

"You think me inferior in modesty to Miss Joliette, then? You think me a husband-hunter, perhaps?" cried Mrs. Malverne. "Well, perhaps you are right. I am here only on sufferance. I have no home. I cannot earn my bread. If you were to send me away, what should I do? I must secure a husband and a maintenance. I am like other women. I want a home and place in the world. I would marry anybody with Sir Mark Trebail's wealth. I frankly avow to you that I mean to marry him!"

Madame Falconer looked shocked.

"Helena, this is unwomanly!"

"What chance do you give me to be womanly?" interrupted Mrs. Malverne. "You have closed your heart upon me. You have given me a home, but no lawful place here. At a word from the scheming adventuress you have adopted you will turn me out. What is this girl to you—this Joliette Stair? She is beautiful, I admit, but that is all. She is only your distant relative, and god-daughter, but I was brought up as your heiress. I have claims which you should not set aside for an act of folly which I have so bitterly repented. I repeat that this Joliette Stair whom you have brought from the Tyrol is a deceitful creature, bad and scheming."

"Hush!" commanded Madame Falconer, sternly. "Not another word!"

"I will speak if you turn me out of your house to-night," exclaimed Mrs. Malverne, her fair face livid with jealous, envious passions. "This beautiful Joliette, whom you think an angel, is very human. It is my opinion that she has a secret lover whom she knows you would not approve. Oh! I have not watched her for nothing."

"Humph! What have you discovered, pray?"

"I have discovered that she has a secret," declared Mrs. Malverne, triumphantly. "You sent her in her pony phaeton to Langworth yesterday morning upon a shopping expedition. She was gone several hours. I drove out during her absence, as you know, and I went to Langworth also. I saw her pony phaeton in front of a bookeller's shop in the High Street, and the groom was in charge of it. I asked him where Miss Stair was. He said that she went into the shop two hours before, and had not yet come out. I went in. The shop was empty of customers. I asked the shopman for Miss Stair, whom, it appeared, he knew. He said that she had visited the shop two hours before, made some purchases, and had passed out at the rear door of his establishment. I had the curiosity to look out at that door myself, and found that it led to a very quiet and very narrow street lined with houses. While I looked I saw Miss Stair coming back. I re-entered the carriage I had occupied, and drove down the street; but I managed to see that she had not been shopping. She must have had a secret appointment which she secretly kept, without even the knowledge of her groom. I know her secret. She went to meet Vernon. I suppose she thinks you would not approve his suit."

Madame Falconer smiled mockingly. She had planned Joliette's expedition to Langworth, and its object had been indeed a secret appointment. A former servant of the abbey had married a mechanic, and settled in the village of Langworth. This servant was a cousin of Meggy Dunn, and at her house Joliette had met her baby and his nurse at the very time alluded to by Mrs. Malverne.

"You need not try to prejudice me against my god-daughter, Helena," said the aged lady, coldly. "Let me hear no more of these insinuations against her, or I shall be indeed compelled to close my doors upon you. Never speak of her again even to me as you have just spoken. Never couple her name again with that of Mr. Vernon!"

"You don't believe me, then? I will prove to you her unworthiness, and that before long," ejaculated Mrs. Malverne. "She cares nothing for you. I will unmask her for a fortune-hunter, a scheming, dangerous person!"

"No more of this. When Joliette is proved false then I will reinstate you in your old place as my heiress," said Madame Falconer, in haughty con-

tempt; "but first you'll have to prove that while is black, Helena Malverne. You cannot shake my faith in my adopted child. I will not harken even to your insinuations against her. Leave me now. I do not care for the company of one who seeks to traduce and vilify one so immeasurably your superior."

Mrs. Malverne arose promptly, in a fury of suppressed rage, and hurried from the room.

Once in her own chamber, she muttered:

"I will prove this Joliette bad and scheming—if I have to forge the proofs! I know the girl had a secret meeting with Vernon at Langworth yesterday, and I'll prove it yet. I will ruin her in Madame Falconer's estimation, and then I will creep into her vacant place! I will not be poor and dependent in the house where I once was looked up to as its future owner. I will ruin Joliette and build up my prosperity on her ruin! And one thing more—I know Sir Mark Trebail's address. I will write him a letter, informing him of my widowhood, appealing to his sympathies, and asking him to return to England. I may secure the abbey and Sir Mark Trebail also. If I fail to win both I may make sure of one. He used to be generous; can I not work upon his pity so that he will offer me his heart? I'll make the effort."

She sat down at her writing-table and proceeded to write a letter to Sir Mark Trebail.

CHAPTER XX.

An ordinary woman would have found it a difficult task to write a letter to a gentleman whom she had not seen for years, one who had never been her suitor, yet whom she wished to lure to her side and make her lover.

But Helena Malverne was not an ordinary woman, as the reader must have seen. She had an undue share of assurance, unlimited faith in herself, and a resolution and determination that were really indomitable. She had determined to obtain an establishment for herself, a secure prosperity for her future, and she was not one to stop at any ordinary obstacles in the way of success.

Her letter was a triumph in its way. She addressed Sir Mark Trebail as a "dear old friend of her girlhood," and told pathetically the story of her wifely marriage and her penitence therefor, of her dreary life in China as the wife of an attaché to an embassy, with a restricted income, a husband who had quickly grown indifferent to her and whom she had come to regard with aversion; of his death, and of her return to England—a friendless, homeless widow, poor and desolate. Then followed these paragraphs:

"I am again at Blair Abbey, the dear old abbey of which I was once the prospective heiress. I am again with Madame Falconer, but she has changed towards me. She is no longer my tender friend, my loving guardian. She has given me shelter from the cold world, but that is all. Where once I was regarded as second only to her I am now the poor dependent. I do not complain of this. I deserve my fate, yet it is none the less hard to bear. To go in and out as one whose presence is merely tolerated, to be set aside for others, to be scorned even by the servants, to see the dark days of utter poverty in the future, when Madame Falconer shall be dead, and to be powerless to avert them—ah, these things are very bitter, Sir Mark, so bitter that I almost wish that I were dead."

"But, bitterest of all, is the fact that I might recover my old position here, and be again the petted heiress, but for a serpent who has crept into the place I left vacant, who has turned my aged friend against me, and who is now heiress in my stead."

"This serpent is a young girl, beautiful, and apparently artless, a woman in her love of intrigue, in her base scheming, in her unprincipled manoeuvres. She is about twenty years of age, and is the god-daughter and very distant relative of Madame Falconer. She was educated at Munich, and came here directly from an humble home in the Tyrol. Her name is Joliette Stair."

"You will think, perhaps, that my sorrows and disappointment have rendered me callously bitter in my denunciation of Miss Stair. But I have made no charge against her which I cannot prove. She has two lovers. Of these one is Adrian Rossett, whom you must remember. The other is your own cousin, Charles Vernon, whom she meets secretly in the village of Langworth, unknown to Madame Falconer. She favours Vernon secretly, and will, I am sure, marry him when she becomes mistress here. Rossett is thought by Madame Falconer to have transferred his allegiance to Miss Lyle, Madame Falconer's companion, who is your cousin, and she is also Vernon's cousin."

"It is for a girl like this Miss Stair that I am cast out. She is unworthy the love of an honourable man, unworthy to rule here in Madame Falconer's stead; yet so artful is she, so seemingly pure and good that you no doubt would deem her an angel."

"You will wonder why I have written to you thus frankly. It is to enlist your sympathy in my friendlessness, and to implore you to intercede for me with Madame Falconer that she may restore to me at least a small portion of her favour. I remember that you were formerly a favourite of hers, and I entreat you to use your influence with her to obtain my pardon from her and restoration to her favour. I do not ask or expect to be reinstated in my former position as her heiress, but I would desire to have some slight provision made for my future out of all her wealth, a pittance which shall keep from want the grand-daughter of her dear old friend when she is no more."

"Pardon me for troubling you with my sad story. If you have not quite forgotten Helena Wild, if the years have not changed your generous nature, I am sure you will use your influence in my favour."

Mrs. Malverne read over this effusion carefully, and said to herself:

"He used to be as generous as the sun. He liked me, although he was never my lover. This letter is sure to touch his heart, and may possibly bring him back to England. I shall address him at St. Petersburg. I flatter myself that I have shown the perfection of art in this letter, and I shall await its result with impatience. Who knows what it may bring forth?"

It was as well, perhaps, that a peep into futurity was not vouchsafed to her.

That letter written to advance her own interests was destined to prove a fire-brand which should ignite into wild flame all the worst and most terrible passions of Sir Mark Trebasill's inflammable nature.

Mrs. Malverne, humming a gay little tune, seated and addressed the missive, addressing it to Sir Mark Trebasill, St. Petersburg, Russia.

Then arose the problem of posting it.

Mrs. Malverne slipped the letter in her pocket and glided down the stairs.

In the great entrance hall, upon a table, stood a pillar-post box of bronze, an imitation of London street pillar-boxes.

This box was regularly emptied every evening by the butler, who transferred the letters to a locked bag and despatched them by a trusted messenger to the post-office at Trebasill village.

Mrs. Malverne knew that the address upon her letter would not suffer inspection, and that even if the butler noticed it he would suppose the letter to have been written by Miss Lyle, Sir Mark Trebasill's cousin.

"There's no danger that Madame Falconer will ever suspect me of writing to Sir Mark Trebasill," thought the young widow. "I am quite safe!"

She slipped the letter into the box through a slit in the top made for the purpose, and returned to her own room.

At the usual hour the butler transferred the letters from the hall pillar-box to the post-bag, and Helena Malverne's letter was fairly started upon its evil mission.

At a later hour, when Joliette Stair, Charlotte Rossiter, and Vernon had returned to the drawing-room, Helena Malverne stole into their presence, in her black robe, like a shadow, and took her place apart, her eyes glowing with envy and jealousy, which she endeavoured to mask under a sickly smile of pretended interest and sympathy.

She remained but a little while, and then retired upon the plea of headache.

The little group in the drawing-room was very gay, absorbed in music and happy conversation, and no one heeded her withdrawal. The hall porter was nodding in his chair as Helena glided through the hall and up the great flighted stairs. In the upper hall she paused. Another flight led to her present rooms, but she turned aside to the handsome apartments occupied by Joliette. A desire to inspect their grandeur haunted her. She opened the door of Joliette's boudoir softly and looked in.

No one was within. Joliette's maid, the country girl who had attended her before her late visit to the Continent, had gone down to the servants' hall for tea and gossip. The wax lights in the lustres overhead and in the candelabra upon the mantelpiece glowed with soft radiance. A sea-coal fire flamed behind the silvered bars of the grate. The tender glow upon the furniture, the exquisite delicacy of its pink tinting, the rich and artistic value of the ivory mountings to the chairs and sofas, all flamed Helena Malverne's soul with a fury of jealousy and hatred.

"Nothing is too bright and beautiful for Joliette Stair," thought the widow with a sneer. "Madame Falconer never lavished money like this for my enjoyment, not even in my palmy days. This artful creature has fairly stolen her way into the old heiress's heart. How I wish I could ruin the girl in the estimation of her benefactress. Madame Falconer would not believe that Miss Stair had

visited Langworth in order to meet Vernon secretly. She would not believe anything against her new favourite unless she could witness it herself. Oh, if there were only some way by which I could make Miss Stair bear evidence against herself! But the truth is, she is too wary for that, or else she really loves the old defunct woman who has adopted her."

Mrs. Malverne examined the pictures and statuettes, the grand piano, the books and ornaments, and at last her roving gaze fell upon the open writing-desk of ebony and silver upon a pretty faded table near a window.

Being without those notions of honour which fetter the notions of most people, the young widow approached the writing-table and examined the contents.

A sheet of paper lay in full view, and upon this was written in a clear, distinguished handwriting, unlike the usual scribbly, school-girl penmanship, several verses of a poem.

Mrs. Malverne read it half aloud, with a contemptuous curl of the lip.

"Lines to my Godson-in-law? It's original, oh? The heiress of Sir Mark Trebasill, a poetess, it seems. Falsehood enough. Doubtless she means to present the poem to Madame Falconer as a tribute of love. Deceitful thing! What need to keep in her desk, I wonder? Has she any secret? Perhaps I shall find the clue to one here."

She opened the little portfolio that without compunction of conscience, her glaucous eyes gleamed as she copied a copy of paper upon which was written a poem with the simple title, "Dedicated."

The widow fairly leered at the poem with longing, dilating eyes.

"That poem is addressed to Madame Falconer," she muttered. "It is intended to refer to a woman. It is some man whom she loves, and from whom she is parted by adverse fate. It refers to Vernon, and she parted from him because he is poor, and Madame Falconer would not allow her heiress to marry a poor man. Here she speaks of her love, her tears, her anguish. 'Slaves my weary head lay on thy breast, my best beloved.' The shameless creature! She dares to write of any man like that! A girl parts thee and me! A wife might write to her husband, verily like these if he were dead, and if she had loved him. What profound despair, what a wild, mad outburst of love! And all for Charles Vernon!"

All this conversation that these whispering words had been the outburst of the love of a wretched and hopeless wife, and that their object had been a jealousy-maddened husband, Mrs. Malverne deposited the poem in her pocket.

"I'll write as a heading to it 'To Charles Vernon,'" she thought, "and show it to Sir Mark Trebasill. He will despise her then even as I hate her!"

She continued her investigations. Presently she discovered in a little inner drawer a tiny volume bound in white morocco and fastened with solid gold clasps. Upon the back the volume was lettered in gilt, "Diary of Joliette Stair."

Mrs. Malverne opened it eagerly. An inscription within showed it to be a recent gift from Madame Falconer to her god-daughter. There were a few entries of no importance, being comments upon books Joliette had read. The widow examined the latest entry, under date of the previous day. It read as follows:

"Drove to Langworth in my pony phaeton. Left the luggage in front of the bookeller's in charge of my old servant, while I secretly visited the house where he was waiting for me! Was with him nearly two hours. Oh, my darling, my own! I feel his kisses still upon my lips, my precious ones! If I might only acknowledge him openly! Perhaps I must wait years before I can claim him as my own, before the world! Oh, if I were only free! How soon shall I be free? Heaven help me to be patient!"

The reader of course comprehends that this passionate outburst referred to Joliette's unacknowledged, unknown baby son, but Mrs. Malverne stared at it, springing to the conclusion that the object of this fervent love was Charles Vernon.

"If Madame Falconer could only see this!" she thought. "Miss Joliette would then be ruined. How plainly she expresses her desire for Madame Falconer's death so that she can marry Vernon! How soon shall I be free? That is, 'How soon will Madame Falconer die so that I can marry my precious one?' That is what she means. I am tempted to take this book to Madame Falconer, but to do so would be to proclaim myself a spy. I know the old heiress's sense of honour so well that I am positive she would not read a line if I wrote to take it to her; but she would reproach me, and perhaps turn me out of her house for spying upon her favourite. I have it! I'll take it in her room and drop it on her floor, so that it will seem to have dropped from Miss

Stair's pocket. The book shall be open, so that if Madame Falconer's hawk-eyes rest upon it she will catch some portion of the meaning and so be compelled to read the rest."

She acted upon this idea, conveying the diary to Madame Falconer's room and leaving it open upon the carpet.

Then she waited in her own room, watching and listening intently.

Madame Falconer ascended the stairs at her usual hour and went to her room, attended by Joliette.

Half an hour later Mrs. Malverne, peeping over the balustrade, beheld Joliette going to her own apartments with her diary in her hand, the brightness of her face unshadowed.

The spy could have gnashed her teeth in her rage.

Her little scheme had failed.

She believed that Madame Falconer had not looked into the diary, and that Joliette was not at all suspicious in regard to the manner in which her little volume had been transported to Madame Falconer's room.

"She thinks she dropped it in there herself!" thought Mrs. Malverne. "Poor idiot! Madame Falconer would never believe a word against her, even with proof. I wish the girl's worthless life was ended. Shall I then turn me out of my rightful place? No, no, no! If she were dead Madame Falconer would substitute me in my old place. If Joliette Stair were dead—"

She started back, her face growing livid.

"If she were dead!" she whispered, trying to familiarize herself with the thought. "While she lives I am nobody's slave. Why should she not die? Shall a worthless creature like her make me a beggar? I cannot out her. I have no influence here; she is all in all. But if she were dead I know I should be heiress in her stead. If she were dead. Let me think!"

She hurried back into her room and put out her lights. For hours she sat in the dark, her eyes gleaming from out the blackness. Some time past midnight she took off her shoes and stole out of her room, and glided down the stairs to Joliette's chamber. She opened the door, and listened with wilful and unbecomingly beating heart. In the dimness her face showed as the face of a murderer. She stole into the door. She yielded. Like a thief, she stole into the room.

(To be continued.)

A TRAVELLER writer on fishes says that they have a language, and instances the noisy mangle, which has a strange cooing moan, accompanied by a sharp creak that can be heard at a depth of 150 ft. The fish, continues the traveller, attains a length of about 6 ft., and weighs 40 lb. What these sounds are for we know not, but on the principle that all things are for some particular purpose they must have a meaning. That the imperfect voice of the fish is used to express discontent and pain he has no doubt, as in numerous experiments on a fish found in the Gulf of Mexico, called the grunt, he found that the voice was used and modulated as with animals.

A CORRESPONDENT writes:—"I spoke to-day with one of the gentlemen of the King's suite, who was present with the King during the journey to Iceland and Scotland, and he told me that his Majesty had been particularly touched with the enthusiastic reception given to his daughter at Leith and Edinburgh. 'I knew,' the King is reported to have said, 'that Alexandra was very popular, but I had no idea that she was such a favourite; and it appears to me as if every body, high and low, personally doted upon her; and if this knowledge had been the only result of my journey, I should have considered myself well paid for the inconvenience I have had to put up with.'"

A GENTLEMAN writes:—"I went the other day up to Twickenham to see York House, which has long been in the market, in order to see the room which was used as a studio by the eminent sculptress, the Hon. Mrs. Damer, and study other matters of interest to my antiquarian tastes. Thence I found my way to an old house, occupied in the last century by Sir John Hawkins, the cross-grained biographer of Dr. Johnson, and the author of the 'History of Music,' and who enjoyed the distinction—such as it is or was—of being 'buried in his shoes and stockings.' In the garden belonging to the house I found a fence curiously wrought with sword-blades, evidently of no recent date, and the gardener told me they were brought from the field of Galloden. Interesting news this to me, seeing that with Temple Bar we shall soon lose the last relic which connects the metropolis with that battle; for, as every one knows, the heads of the rebels who were captured there were set on spikes on the top of the gateway."



[ASTONISHING THE CAPTAIN.]

THE THREADS OF LIFE.

It was a large airy room, elegant in all its appointments. The windows were draped with blue silk, set in highly-polished walnut frames, beneath which curtains of gauzy lace floated away, caught on either side by silver clasps.

The walls were tinted with a warm pink, and adorned with rare and costly engravings.

The furniture was of black walnut, covered with light blue velvet just two shades lighter than the deep carerulean which predominated in the carpet, and which was intersected with elegant designs in gold and silver lines.

In the farther extreme of the room, at the left of the entrance to the sleeping apartment, which was curtained with heavy blue silk, stood a magnificent pianoforte; on the right a small desk, richly carved.

The elaborately ornamented chandelier which hung in the centre of the room gave forth a mellow light through its six porcelain globes, which was reflected again from the crystal mirrors, and fell around and upon a young man who sat at the desk in an attitude of meditation.

Tall, muscular and finely formed, he seemed the embodiment of masculine beauty. Sedate yet gentle in feature, he seemed to unite the firmness and courage of man with all the tender qualities of woman.

Arising anon, he walked slowly across the room to the piano, and, seating himself, played a waltz with skill and grace.

"That is the first waltz I ever danced! How well I remember the little hall in Northbrook, the pompous master, and the little girls oft-times my partners! Eighteen years ago—what changes have occurred since then! Some of those blithe little maidens have passed beyond, others are scattered over the country, forgetful perhaps in new scenes of the joys of the old; others have become mothers, and recall with tender thoughts the sweets of their own childhood, in watching their darlings repeat

the life that is thousands of years old and yet blooms afresh with every new birth."

He struck the keys again thoughtfully, and drew forth a sad yet tender refrain. What it was he knew not, but it was familiar to him, and he kept on playing from very sympathy with the memory that held the well-loved notes, and yet refused to give them a title.

"My mind is on the past to-night, and yet I am by no means unhappy. If I were, a glance at my little palace ought to shame me into contentment. How I have longed to satisfy my taste—to surround myself with elegance and luxury. I have done it—I have feasted my eyes and congratulated myself times without number. I have rested in the thought that the coming day was not to bring a struggle for existence, and yet as each condition of life, having served its purpose, passes away to give room for a new one, so has my rest palled upon me, and at times I grow lonely."

He arose, and, locking his hands behind him, walked the room a few minutes in silence. Then with a half-sigh he passed into the chamber, and returned presently with ten volumes of records, which he placed upon the desk.

Seating himself, he selected a volume, and having looked it over for a few moments, read the following:

"May, 20, 1841.

"I wonder what has come over Lilla Morton. I'm sure I've done nothing to make her angry. I met her this noon, and spoke to her, as I always do, but she wouldn't answer a word. I suppose Tufts or somebody else has been depreciating me to her. Let me catch him, that's all."

"Evening.

"I must put a line in here before I go to bed. I saw Lilla to-night, when I was riding by her house on my pony, and she looked as if she would like to speak, so of course I stopped. She acted offish as soon as she saw that I was good-natured. What do girls always get on the opposite side for? I

jumped off the pony's back, after a few minutes, and tied him to a tree. Lilla found her tongue after a while, and we had a good talk. She said she didn't mean to be cross to me, and she liked me better than she did any of the boys. She is a splendid girl. I stayed with her until nine o'clock, and gave up my ride. Lilla said I was very good to deny myself so much for her sake. Just then her mother called her into the house, and I had just time to steal a kiss. Then I untied the pony and rode a mile, and then came home."

"Heavens! Did I ever write such stuff as this?" exclaimed Malcolm Rivers, in mingled wonder and derision. "Such a passage of nonsense—but stop! Nonsense now, but sense then, according to my age and experience. I was only fourteen, and—well—they were happy days. Lilla was a beautiful child—I remember her distinctly. Ah! now I know the name of that song I was playing a few moments ago—'Lily Dale,' and my Lilla used to sing it very prettily. Well—let me look at another volume!"

Choosing a book numbered four, he read from the first page that his eye fell upon:

"June 10, 1846.

"I have been here in Cambridge two years, and have kept ahead of my class. If it is an earthly possibility I desire to leap over the heads of the students and enter the senior class next year. It would make father so proud of me, and mother so glad. Being the only child, I have a double duty to perform towards them, and I trust I may be enabled to carry it out to the letter. I think I have more than ordinary powers of mind, and if I can so direct them as to win a position of trust and honour my ambition will be realized. We all indulge in dreams more or less, but this is no vision conjured up to please my fancy, but a strong, earnest purpose that I mean to pursue."

"Evening.

"I have just returned from a call upon a Miss Lennox, who is a very demure, timid, helpless sort of creature. Everybody calls her pretty, but to me her face lacks expression. Despite her artlessness I believe her to be crafty, deceitful and peevish. She turned partially around twice this evening, and I was sure it was to conceal her vexation at remarks made by her mother. I should like to see a girl act naturally once; they all seem to think that foreign airs and graces are essential to produce a favourable impression. It is singular they cannot get it through their heads that modesty and simplicity are woman's greatest attractions. Heigho! I'm tired. I'll look over Cicero a little, and then to bed."

"Fond dreams of youth!" mused Rivers, sadly. "How bright, how beautiful, yet how hollow, how delusive! But I've begun this, and I'll read my life over. I wonder now how I ever had patience to write it. But to go on—ah! how well I remember the next day—that terrible day, but—"

"June 11, 1846.

"When I came from the morning recitation a telegram from home was given me. I opened it at once on the college grounds, and earth and heaven seemed thrown into confusion—chaos seemed to reign again, and the air to pulsate with demoniacal voices. I reeled, and caught at a tree to save myself from falling, and then, seeing many eyes upon me, I called forth all my strength and tried to be calm. But my nature was trembling under its burden—the burden of death, for my father had died the night previous—stricken down in his glorious manhood at one fell blow. Returning to the college, I notified my preceptor of my loss, and as soon after as possible started for home. How should I, how could I meet my mother? My imagination pictured her grief with such awful vividness that my own was doubled."

"I can't go on—the feelings of that hour return!" said Rivers, in a low, tremulous voice, and, closing the book, he seated himself at the piano and dashed into a lively aria.

But there was a strange fascination in that stack of journals, which contained the history of his life interwoven with his noblest thoughts.

Returning presently, he re-opened volume four and continued reading.

"August 5, 1846.

"I have not returned to college yet; and there is no prospect that I ever shall. Upon looking into father's affairs we find them seriously embarrassed, and if we can keep the estate out of Chancery we shall do very well! Poor mother! my heart aches for her. It seems very hard in the midst of a terrible grief to be compelled to face that phantom poverty. She will not have a shilling comparatively after the debts are paid. What will be the result of this double shock to her nerves is more than I dare to think of. I don't know why I write here; sometimes I imagine it affords me relief, and again I am sure it aggravates my trials, and sets me at war with myself and all the world. I am weary now at all times; I seem to live in a darkened world, but I disguise

my feelings before mother, and assume a calmness that mocks me the instant I am alone. I believe I will give up this journal; I can't write decently, and every time I behold it my sorrows seem to assume living shapes and taunt me."

"September 7, 1846.

"We leave our old home to-morrow—the house in which mother was married, the dearly beloved place of my birth! Mother has been weeping all day; not a particle of nourishment has passed her lips, and she looks very weak and ill. Oh, Heavens! this is almost more than I can bear. I am so anxious concerning her health that I cannot sleep without being haunted with dreadful dreams. She begs me not to worry so much about her; but how can I turn back the current of my love and bid my heart be still?"

"September 15, 1846.

"We are in London, mother and I, living in three little rooms, up three flights of stairs, in a portion of the city none too respectable. Mother is not well, and the duties of our small household are too much for her. She has a hard, dry cough, her sleep is unrefreshing, and at times she is very feverish. These terrible facts stare me in the face night and day—I cannot banish them! Why is it, oh, Heaven, that I must suffer so? Why am I prevented from giving her such a home as she needs? I have talents—I only yearn and pray for an opportunity to use them, but lawyers, editors, merchants, all shake their heads at me when I apply for a clerkship, and so I am doing my duty as a porter—I who stood in advance of my class in college, and was the favourite of the faculty. Ah, well! we make only one journey through this world—thank Heaven for that. My only consolation when I think to what low uses my powers are put is the fact that I am working for mother; otherwise my pride could not endure the insults which I receive daily from those beneath me in natural abilities and education. I try to be cheerful before mother; she regrets only too keenly the necessity that forces me to tasks so uncongenial without hearing complaints from my lips."

"November 7, 1846.

"Oh, Heaven, take me—take me—my mother is dead!" Rivers shuddered as he said this and tears sprang to his eyes. Time nor eternity can never efface the love that a devoted son bears for a pure and true mother.

Brushing away the mist from his eyes, he opened another volume, and read on with a sad interest.

"July 13, 1848. At sea.

"In violation of every desire of my heart I have lived. Had it not been for mother's oft-repeated words to me: 'God orders all things for the best, my son,' and 'Not in our time but in His shall our eyes be opened and all things be made plain to us,' I believe I should have taken my own life ere this. I have been on the verge of starvation, and have lain weak, and faint, in the streets of London until removed by the police, and brought back to life by being fed. The mortification, the humiliation of this was worse than a hundred deaths. And after rescuing me—after forcing me back into the world which I hated, they dared to accuse me of being a vagabond, of wasting money in drink! If I had the strength I could have torn them to pieces. For a week I had lived on the merest trifle and begged for work, but without success; every one seemed to distrust me. Why? Heaven knows; I don't. But it passed; and that other event whose misery I will not experience again even in my thoughts. Now I am here in mid-ocean, on the barque 'Cloudless,' doing duty before the mast. I strive to believe that there is some great purpose hidden from my view which will sometimes make itself manifest and show me the benefit of this tempestuous life of mine."

"August 23, 1848. At sea.

"Yesterday we buried the supercargo, who died very suddenly with inflammation of the heart. This morning the captain asked me rather doubtfully if I thought I could perform the duties of a supercargo. I answered quietly in the affirmative, and he ordered me into the cabin to examine me as to my qualifications for the position. I smiled at this—the first time I have smiled I think since mother left me; but there was something very ridiculous in the idea of appearing before him for examination. He showed genuine surprise when I passed him a sample of my penmanship; and when I asked him if I should figure out some problems from Euclid for his edification he wanted to know who Euclid was!"

"October 10, 1848.

"We have arrived at Antwerp and are discharging cargo. The captain has become very friendly and says I make an excellent supercargo."

"July 19, 1850.

"I reached England last week and have con-

cluded to remain on shore. Captain Barton evinced much regret at parting with me, complimented me very highly upon my services during the two voyages I sailed with him, and said in conclusion that he had never found a better companion or a more upright man. I know he spoke sincerely, for he hates flattery with as much intensity as he does a land-shark. His words gave me much gratification. It seems now as if the clouds were floating away, as if the sunshine of prosperity were about to illumine my path. I have five hundred pounds—three-fifths of which I saved from my salary while at sea, and the remainder I made in trading at foreign ports. These must be the nucleus of my fortune—not one penny must be taken from it, but much more must be added to it! As I write these words I must think what a blessing this money would have been four years ago, when my beloved mother was alive! Can it be right that it was denied me then? I must pause; the agony of those hours returns to me—it inflames my mind—tortures my heart and shakes my faith! Give me peace, oh, Heaven, and let me not doubt thy wisdom!"

"July 25, 1850.

"I bought two houses this morning and I had hardly concluded the bargain before I was informed by those who assumed to be good judges of such transactions that I had thrown my money away; that London would never grow out far enough to make them valuable. I think they are wrong, and yet I feel somewhat uncomfortable and dissatisfied. But it is too late for repining; the contract is closed, and if I have lost, why, it is a dearly bought experience, that is all. I propose to banish all anxiety concerning the matter, however. The question is now: What shall I do? I would like to study law, I have a taste for it. I will endeavour at once to make an arrangement in accordance with my wishes."

"August 1, 1850.

"Through the influence of the man who sold me my land I have obtained a clerkship with an eminent law firm, which will bring me a fair salary, and at the same time give me an opportunity to study. I hope I am grateful for this success—I trust I never shall rebel at circumstances again. If I had not had this bitter experience I should not appreciate my present good fortune to the extent I do. Now for study again! Once more I am in the realm of books and my old feelings revive a little. Can you see me, mother, to-night? Do you know that, although suffering defeat after defeat, I have pushed steadily on until at last victory seems within my grasp? I say seems, for although I have no fears to the contrary I am very careful now to take nothing for granted, either from men, women, or circumstances. I distrust nobody, but I am cautious with everybody."

"October 2, 1850. Midnight.

"I have spent the evening at the house of my junior employer, Mr. Bartlett. Among the ladies there was one who attracted my attention at the very first by her frank, winning manner, her unconscious modesty and her charming vivacity. I never asked myself if she was pretty—never thought of it until she arose to depart; then her full, lustrous eyes, black as jet, were turned towards me, and I—well, I realised that they were very beautiful, that her face was very fair, her teeth very white and even. Only an instant did she allow her glance to rest upon me—upon me—how foolish!—in my direction, I mean. I think I had better pause; I am growing childish again! The next thing I know I shall be raving about love as I used to when a boy. Love—what is it? A dream—a fancy—a delusion—an infatuation that takes advantage of each man's particular weakness and leads him to deceive himself with hopes too bright for earth. In the two months I have been in this office I have seen more of conjugal misery than I ever imagined could exist. After this I will study evenings; I am not yet firmly grounded enough in solid sense to go into society."

"November 12, 1850.

"I met Miss Carlton this afternoon. She bowed very graciously. What of it, you idiot? That is the question. I have not seen her before since October, and I will confess I have thought of her frequently. Well, I am only a human being, after all."

"December 27, 1850.

"I have called twice on Miss Carlton. I believe she possesses those qualities that glorify woman's name and ennoble human nature, blessing richly all who come within their radius. In other words, she has patience, forbearance, fortitude, charity and constancy. The beauty of her physical is eclipsed by the ethereal loveliness of her mental charms."

"June 19, 1851.

"I am advancing rapidly in my studies. My employers examine me occasionally, and invariably tell me that I am doing well, and ought not to expect to do better. Fannie (Miss Carlton) frequently

chides me for studying late at night, and says, in her tender, anxious way: 'You will wear yourself out, Malcolm.' I might as well confess, I suppose, now I have written so much, that Fannie is my betrothed wife, that we are to be married as soon as I am admitted to practice, and—well, I am very happy. I know that she is all that is pure and good, and that she loves me devotedly. I am sure mother would love her if she could see her, and as to father—why, she is the ideal woman that he always loved to talk about, pointing to mother invariably as her prototype."

"August 2, 1852.

"One week ago I was examined by a commission and having answered their thousand-and-one questions correctly, I was this morning admitted to practice as an attorney. Now, if I do not win a reputation, it will be my own fault. I have everything to encourage me, the regard and respect of my late employers, the prospect of a happy home—which includes the inestimable blessing of Fannie's love—and the calm gratification of having worked my own way up to this point."

"Midnight.

"I called upon Fannie this evening; she seemed strangely indifferent when I told her of my admission to the bar, and—let me make it as brief as possible. Is there anything true in this world? My folly is well repaid. When I came away she gave me back my ring, and said, very quietly, 'I think we have erred. I think we are not suited to one another. You may deem this unkind; but to me a little grief now is much better than a life of misery.' I know that a pallor settled upon my face; I could feel its influence in the roots of my heart. 'Is this your wish?' I queried. 'Yes, Mr. Rivers.' I asked no more questions, and, without looking upon her again, left the house. I am miserable to-night. Again the cherished hopes of my nature lie withered at my feet. I cannot drive my sorrow away, but I can conquer it. I can harden it, and wear it as a coat of mail to protect me from those who wear bright truth in their faces and treachery most foul in their hearts. But enough; henceforth let all my thoughts be centred upon fame and fortune."

"August 2, 1855.

"I have a practice that gives me two thousand a year, clear. My houses have risen in value. Yesterday I was offered a magnificent sum for each; but although the offer was good, I believe it is for my interest to wait. Land in that neighbourhood will be at fabulous prices soon. I have not seen Fannie since that night when she destroyed the last hope of love in this world. She is not married, I understand."

Rivers closed the book, and, arising, ran his hands through his hair, as if to clear his brain from the mists of the past.

"I ought not to have dwelt over those volumes so long; it always makes me feel miserable. Heigho! it is lonely here. I have a fair reputation for a man only thirty-two, and I have five thousand pounds at interest, besides a little land—a fair share of fame and fortune, I think. But I can't live alone; it is useless to try. My sympathies are too strong—my yearning for some one to speak to too intense. And yet what can I do? Marriage? Oh, no, no—single misery is bad enough, double is worse! I have little faith in womankind."

One week later our friend, finding business dull, and feeling the need of recreation, resolved to visit the home of his childhood. Eighteen years had changed the place so that he hardly knew it. Where the old tavern stood was now an elegant hotel, and the low wooden buildings that once lined the main street had given way to spacious brick houses. The acquaintances of his childhood were mostly gone—no one knew him.

Walking one day through a beautiful street shaded with noble trees, he met a fair, sweet-faced woman, whom he thought at first he knew, but argued to himself that she was too young for Lilla, as she would be thirty now, if alive.

But he turned to obtain another glance, and lo! the lady had turned too, and was looking at him. She blushed rosily, and sought to hurry away; but he stopped her with a few well-chosen words, and said:

"Pardon me; but it seems as if I knew you. Many years have passed, but you remind me strongly of Lilla Morton."

"And you, I am sure, are Malcolm Rivers," she said, with a brilliant smile.

"The same," he replied, grasping her hand. "This meeting renews my youth; but it cannot have the same effect upon you, for yours is still fresh."

"What you have lost in youth you have gained in maturity," she retorted, laughing.

Is it necessary to say that he walked home with her, that his visit to Northbrook was prolonged two weeks, and that he sought Lilla's side as often as courtesy would allow?

They talked over all the pleasures of their childhood, discussed life and its philosophy, and finally concluded that the use and purpose of existence was love.

Malcolm arose then, and prepared to return to his hotel. "Glancing to the left of the room, where Mrs. Morton sat, he saw that she was sound asleep.

Gazing down upon Lilla, he said, tenderly: "Lilla, I love you. Will you go home with me as my wife?"

"I've always hoped you would say that," she replied, growing crimson at her own words.

That the side of life swept Malcolm Rivers back to his first love, and gave him a wife who made him as happy as woman can—and that is saying a great deal.

FACTIE.

A widow, who wants to marry again, mentions, as an inducement to candidates, that she has used one broom fourteen years.

WHAT is the difference between a hill and a pill? One is hard to get up, and the other is hard to get down.

A TAILOR who, in skating, fell through the ice declared that he would never again leave a hot goose for a cold duck.

An old farmer says: "Talk about drainage, the surest drain on a farm is a mortgage at a high rate of interest."

A GERMAN writing home concluded his letter thus: "If I live till I die, tell my friends at home that I shall visit mine, Ireland, before I leave here."

A SUGGESTIVE FRAGMENT.
Fond Wife: "Lark's a-daisy, Mrs. Gipping, my husband ain't always like that! Sometimes he's as nice as I am myself!"—*Punch.*

THE QUESTION SETTLED.
Mrs. M-l-pr-p: "The fact is, my love, that these terrible collisions would never occur if the trains was only more punctual!"—*Punch.*

ARGUMENTUM AD HOMINEM!
Dealer: "I know you don't like his head, and I allow he ain't got a purty 'ead; but lor'—new look at Gladstone, the cleverest man in all England!—and look at his head!"—*Punch.*

LAWN TENNIS.
Miss Maud: "How do we stand?"
Captain Louisa: "They are six to our love; and 'love' always means nothing, you know."
Miss Maud: "Always?"—*Punch.*

A POPULAR clergyman says it is interesting to observe how many people go to the circus "just to please the children," and very curious to notice that sometimes it takes several able-bodied men and motherly women to look after one little boy or girl on such an occasion.

PLANTS AND ANIMALS.—Have we any native "carnivorous plants"? Some appear to be denoted such by their names—dog-rose, foxglove, now-thistle, hawkweed, dandelion; and amongst those which, though not indigenous, are cultivated in gardens, there is the tiger-lily.—*Punch.*

SYMPATHETIC.
Small Gent: "You see there's a something between real gentlemen as leads them to converse with one another no matter where they meet, and I expect that feeling was the reason you asked me the way to the H. Alexandra Hotel!"—*Punch.*

BLIND LOVE.
"Thomas," said a father to his son, "don't let the girl make a fool of you. Remember the old adage, that 'Love is blind.'"

"Oh, talk about love's being blind," said Tom; "why, I see ten times as much in the girls as you do."

A CROOKED ANSWER.
Broom: "Hello, Tommy, what's you down here?"
Tommy: "Yes, m' boy, only just arrived straight from London by the 3'60."

Captain Chaffington: "Ah! straight from London, did you? My Jove, then you must have got warped on the way, Tommy!"—*Punch.*

A WRONG APPLE-TATION.
The Rev. Mr. Quilbitt: (who is short-sighted and has mistaken the clerk for an orchard thief): "I'll teach you to come after my apples!"

The Clerk (who has called about a wedding): "Please, sir, I didn't come about apples, but for a pair!"—*Punch.*

JUST LIKE HIM.
Mrs. Pittmans: (moved to poetry): "Oh, Horace, if we was to have a little fountain in the middle of the grass plot, wouldn't it look sweetly?"

Mr. Pittmans: "We'll have one, my darling, with a Cupid on the top, in a pretty attitude like this."

Mrs. Pittmans: "Go along with you, you never can be serious!"

A MOTHER.—Piffins has been to Paris, and says the French are such odd people. He was trying to

make himself agreeable to the lady at a restaurant who asked him if he would take sugar with his coffee. He asked her to sweeten it with one of her smiles, and she answered that they hadn't caught any that day. The lady thinks the English are very odd people. The explanation is simple. Piffins asked her to sweeten his coffee with a smile, which means a mouse, instead of sourire, which means a smile.—*Fun.*

A DIFFERENCE.

One day as Mr. C. was limping down the High Street of Edinburgh, from the Court of Sessions, he overheard a young lady say to her companion, rather loudly:

"That is Mr. C., the lame lawyer."

Upon which he turned round and, with his usual force of expression, said:

"No, madam, I am a lame man, but not a lame lawyer."

THINKING ALIKE.

"You quarrel with your wife, my friend, and why? Do you not think and wish alike?"

"Heaven knows we do," said poor Caudley, "each of us wants to be master."

Two gentlemen, one named Woodcock, the other Fuller, walking together, happened to see an owl, the last said: "That bird is very much like a Woodcock." "You are very wrong," said the first, "for it is Fuller in the head, Fuller in the eyes, and Fuller all over."

TOO MUCH FOR MONEY.

The peculiarity which affects the minds of our extremely rich but very miserably postal authorities with regard to "boy sorters" seems to have adapted itself to the ideas of a City tradesman, who advertises thus:

CLERK WANTED.—Must write quick. I can read and write French correctly preferred. Wages 10s. per week.—Apply by letter, stating age, to —.

And yet some people wonder why knowledge is not now-a-days better than houses and land; and others are surprised that there is a difficulty in keeping clerks in situations of trust and temptation exorbitantly honest!—*Fun.*

EQUAL TO THE OCCASION.—Rich people of a mean sort not long since would drive to St. Bartholomew's and get gratuitous advice as out-patients. Dr. — was determined to stop this abuse, and he did it by a series of outrageous assaults on the self-love of the offenders. Noticing a lady dressed in silk, who had driven up to the hospital in a hansom, he raised his rich, thunderous, sarcastic voice, and, to the inexpressible glee of a roomful of young students, addressed the lady thus:—"Madam, this obesity is for the poor, destitute, miserable invalids of London. So you are a miserable invalid in a silk dress—a destitute invalid in a rich silk dress—a poor invalid in a dress that such obese might wear. Madam, I refuse to pay attention to miserable, destitute invalids who wear rich silk dresses. You had better order your carriage, madam!" The lady was equal to the occasion; she offered him sixpence and went.

A MAN OF PRINCIPLE.

A distinguished editor was in his study.
A long, thin, ghostly-visaged individual was announced.

With an asthmatic voice, but in a tone of stupid civility—for otherwise the editor would have assuredly transfixed him with a fiery paragraph the next morning—the stranger said:

"Sir, your journal of yesterday contained false information."

"Impossible, sir; but what do you allude to?"

"You said that Mr. M—— had been tried."

"True."

"Condemned."

"Very true."

"Hung."

"Yes."

"Now, sir, I am that gentleman."

"Impossible."

"I assure you it is a fact, and now I hope you will contradict what you have alleged."

"By no means."

"You are deranged."

"I may be, sir, but I will not take it back."

"I will complain to a magistrate."

"As you please, but I never retract. The most I can do for you is to announce that the rope broke, and that you are now in perfect health. I have, my principles, I never retract."

THROWING STONES AT THE DEVIL.

A late reverend divine, well known for his quaint wit, as well as for his kindness of heart, walking out to the back of his house, where a new street was opening, saw an Irishman hard at work with a crowbar striving to dislodge a huge stone from the ground, where it was held fast by the roots of a tree.

Pat's patience was fairly exhausted by the vain struggles he had made, and at last he exclaimed, in a great passion:

"The devil take it! the devil take it!"

The old pastor approached him, and quietly remarked that he ought not to make such free use of the name of the evil one, and certainly not throw such a big stone at him as that.

Pat was quiet in a minute, and striking his crowbar into the ground, and leaning leisurely on it, he turned up his face at once to the pastor and the sunlight, and while ever it regularly played those iridescent forebanners of "pure Irish" wit he replied:

"Och, then, an' it's yerself that's 'badin' a fault wid me for sayin' that same. Troth, it's yes an' the likes o' yees that's paid by the year for abusin' the old gentleman all the time, sure."

The old pastor turned away to smile and enjoy the retort.

NATURE MIXED.

"What's the matter, Bob?"

"Sam, who am I?"

"Why, you are yourself, Bob Harrison, ain't you?"

"No, far from it."

"Why, what's the matter?"

"Well, sir, I'm so mixed up I don't know who I am!"

"Well, sir, what's the matter?"

"Why I'm married."

"Married? Ha! ha! ha! why, sir, you should be happy."

"Well, Sam, I'll tell you how it is. You see, I married a widow, and this widow had a daughter."

"Oh, yes, I see how it is: You have been making love to this daughter."

"No! worse than that. You see, my father was a widower, and he married the daughter, so that makes my father my son-in-law, don't it? Well, don't you see how I'm mixed up?"

"Well, sir, is that all?"

"No; I only wish it was! Don't you see, my step-daughter is my step-mother, ain't she? Well, then, her mother is my grandmother, ain't she? Well, I'm married to her, ain't I? So that makes me my own grandfather, doesn't it?"

AN EDITOR'S EXPERIENCE.

After an editor had remained a bachelor until thirty-five one would suppose he was able to select a wife whom one could live with without quarrelling at least; but such was not the case with our friend Williams.

After dreaming of earthly bliss he concluded to try love in a cottage. He found a partner to suit and began housekeeping. Never was an editor so happy. It was "my love," "duck," "sweetest," etc., in every sentence.

Shortly after housekeeping began, trouble began. Some evil genius put it into our "duck's" head to have some pudding for dinner, just to please her lord.

After partaking of a heavy dinner of substantial the pudding moment arrived, and a huge slice almost obscured from sight the plate before him.

"My dear, did you make this?"

"Yes, love; ain't it nice?"

"Glorious—the best bread pudding I ever tasted in my life."

"Plum pudding, duck," suggested the wife.

"Oh, no, dearest, bread pudding. I always was a fond of 'em."

"Call that bread pudding, if you like!" exclaimed the wife, and her lip slightly curled with contempt.

"Well, my dear, I reckon I've had enough at the old house to know bread pudding at least, my love."

"Husband, this is really too bad, plum pudding is twice as hard to make as bread pudding, in more expensive, and a great deal better. Besides, I had enough bread pudding to die me a lifetime when I was at boarding-school, and never intend to make it. I say this is plum pudding, sir!" and the pretty wife's brow flushed with excitement.

"My love, my sweet," he said, soothingly, "do not get angry. I'm sure it is very good if it is bread pudding."

"You mean, low fellow," fiercely exclaimed the wife, in a louder tone, "you know it is plum pudding."

"Then, madam, it is so meanly put together and so badly burned that the fiend himself would not know it. I tell you, madam, most distinctly and emphatically, and I will not be contradicted, it is bread pudding, and the meanest kind at that."

"It is plum pudding!" shrieked the wife, as she hurled a glass of claret in his face, the glass itself tapping the claret from his nose.

"Bread pudding!" gasped he, pluck to the last, and grasping a roasted chicken by the left leg.

"Plum pudding!" rose above the din, and then was heard the crashing of two plates across his head.

"Bread pudding," he groaned in a rage, as the chicken left his hand and landed in madam's bosom.

"Plum pudding!" responded she, as she hurled a

gray dish and contents upon the enemy's head, and a plate of boots landed upon his white vest.

"Broad pudding!" shouted he, in defiance, and darted out of the house, leaving mud on the field alone.

Moral.—Beware of the first quarrel.

A GREEN WITNESS.

In a breach of promise case an Irish lad employed by the defendant, a dentist, was put in the box to prove the use, on defendant's part, of flirts and endearments and love passages, said to have transpired in his office, when the following examination took place:

"Michael, do you know the plaintiff?"

"Sur?"

"Do you know that lady? Have you ever seen her before?"

"Is it the old man or young man you mean, sur?"

"Mother and daughter were both in court."

"The young one, sir, of course."

"Well, then, maybe I might see her once."

"Oh, you have seen her once! Where was that?"

"Well, indeed, I couldn't tell, sir, as it wasn't in the office; but I'd know by her teeth."

The lady was directed to exhibit her teeth, which she did.

"Well, sir, what do you say now; was that the lady?"

"It was, sur; I'd know her too the other side."

(Laughter.)

"Have you seen her in the office more than once?"

"Well, indeed, as I couldn't tell, maybe I might or might not. I've a powerful bad memory that way."

"Well, sir, when did you see her, was it on the day spoken of? Was your master in the room?"

And if so, state what took place between the parties."

"Well, thin, when I knew he was, sur, sure I wouldn't say, sir, but I seen nobbin' take place on'y the cat, the crator, playin' with the string of her shoe."

"Did the lady, on that day, come there for the purpose of having an operation performed, or were they merely engaged in conversation? Answer me, sir, without hesitation."

"Well, thin, I wouldn't say for the likes o' me to say. Maybe your honour had ax the lady—she might know better nor me."

"I ask you, sir, did you see an operation performed?"

"Well, thin, as I knew what it was, I might tell. Is it pullin' a tooth yess, mame?"

"Yes, pulling or filling, or anything else. Did he kiss her?"

"Well, thin, I didn't hear 'em."

"Hear him! Did you see him?"

"Dade I did."

"Ah, I thought so. You saw him kiss her?"

"Dade I did not."

"Did you not just say you saw him?"

"Dade I did."

"Well, now him kiss her?"

"Int'rethly, no!"

"No trifling, sir. I begin to suspect you, not so green as you pretend to be. Now, sir, without equivocation, state what you mean. Did you or did you not see him, on that day, kiss that lady?"

"Well, thin, I did see 'em, but not kiss the lady; because when she was in it he wasn't."

"Did you not tell me just now you knew he was in the room, and you wouldn't say again it?"

"No, to truth! But when I knew he was I wouldn't say again it."

"Sit down, sir. May it please the court, it is impossible to elicit anything from the stupidity of that witness."

The court laughed, and smiled a judicial smile; and coincided with the opinion—in part.

Michael was dismissed.

The great gallery of the Louvre, facing the banks of the Seine, after three years' work, will be shortly opened to the public. Its whole length is 700 metres.

Rubens's "History of Queen Marie de Medicis" occupies one fourth of the gallery, which will be filled with paintings by masters whose works have hitherto not found a place in the collection.

The Chateau d'Amboise, which now belongs to the Count de Paris, is to be restored; it will cost £600,000 to do so. The Duc d'Angoulême will contribute a large portion of this sum. It is an error to say that the tomb of Leonardo da Vinci was recently discovered in this chateau, for the tomb in question was discovered eight years since by the Emperor Napoleon, who caused a pedestal in granite and a bust to be erected on the spot.

The black, or dell's sapphire, was supposed to be a coin given by his Majesty for the purchase

of the soul and body of any person who was willing to make such a bargain. Though not of legal currency, it had one advantage—whenever kept it constantly in their pocket, however much money they might spend, always found a good sixpence beside it. Although this is a Scotch legend it would certainly be more undoubtedly Scotch and less liable to question if the narrator had made it half-a-crown.

AMONGST some of the astonishing habits which tourists observe in the highlands is the habit of early drinking a glass of strong whisky, which "Donald" designates his "mornin'." A thirsty native being accosted when taking a drink of Loch water through a straw he picked up and applied as a conductor, of the pure and innocent fluid, "Well, are you taking your mornin'?" replied, "That might do for your mornin', but we like something w' our blood in it." There was too much water and too little fire in it for Donald.

A LITTLE GADABOUT.

This pretty Madge is wont to roam;

Indeed, is seldom found at home;

By those who court the giddy thing

Who seems for ever on the wing.

Old Greene comes with bags of gold

And splendid cage the bird to hold;

In vain for him to kneel and sue;

Says Madge, "I'm not at home—to you!"

Oh, she is such a gadabout!

She's always out! she's always out!

And in her sweet, bewitching way

She leads her followers astray.

They strive with many an artful lure,

This maid in wedlock to secure,

And find her smiling smile or frown

As hard to catch as thistle-down.

Ah, me! the truth they soon must know,

And cease to vex a maiden so

Who's young enough awhile to roam,

And still declares she's "not at home!"

Oh, she is such a gadabout!

She's always out! she's always out!

And in her sweet, bewitching way

She leads her followers astray.

The pretty Madge, with careless grace,

May lead her suitors many a chase,

And they will grove without a doubt

That she is such a gadabout.

But if I should a wooing go

I wonder if she'd serve me so?

With love to offer, love may win,

And hope to find the truant in!

For though she is a gadabout

(She's always out! she's always out!),

I've half a mind to try and see

If she won't be "at home" to me!

J. P.

GEMS.

The prodigal robs his heir, the miser robs him-

self.

The heart that is at once softened by gratitude

and the fear of joy will show its thankfulness in this

at least, that it will be kinder towards others.

One's really kind office of love to ameliorate the

distresses of a suffering child of humanity has more

power to refine and exalt the soul than the study of

whole tomes of theories on the perfectibility of

human virtue.

Men are always disappointed when their desires

are immoderate; or when they suffer their passions

to overpower their reason, and dwell upon deligh-

ful scenes of future honours, power or riches till

they mistake probabilities for certainties, or wild

wishes for rational expectations. If such men, when

they awake from these voluntary dreams, find the

pleasing phantom vanish away, what can they blame

but their own folly?

Few things in social life tend more directly to

retard simple and truthful intercourse than the

general respect accorded to mere fluency of words.

This facility of speech deals mainly with surfaces,

loves to discuss the weather, the last new novel, or

lecture, or concert, the gossip of a small circle, or

the current news of the day, not from any intrinsic

interest they may possess to speaker or listener,

but from the habit of talking, or the desire to

shine with what seems a charming vivacity.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

CHERRY-ROE CHOPS.—Take out your chops when

cooked; keep a large spoonful of fat in which they

were cooked in a pan dredged in as much flour as

will make a paste; rub this well together over the

fire until a light brown, then pour in as much boiling

water as will reduce it to the thickness of cream,

and add a tablespoonful of mushroom catsup, and a

little salt; let this simmer five minutes, and pour it through a sieve over the steak.

PRESERVING NUTS.—As nuts appear likely to be

abundant this year, it seems a pity not to preserve

them. Take as many clean flower-pots as you may

require to contain nuts sufficient for a year's or even

two years' consumption; this is advisable in case of

a failure with the crop. First plug up the hole at

the bottom of the pot with a cork. The nuts with

the green pod, as picked from the tree, must be dried

and then closely packed until within an inch of the

top. Next lay a sheet of paper over the top, on

which pour as much dry sand as will completely fill

up the remaining space. The weight of the sand

will press the paper down to the nuts, and thus ex-

clude air, which after all is the grand secret of pre-

serving nuts. The loose ends of the paper may be

secured by a string round the rim of the pot. The

usual way of preserving nuts is by laying them upon

shelves in large quantities, covering them with sand,

and sometimes a sheet of paper placed between them

and the fruit. The objection to this, in the case where

no paper was used, was that it was impossible to get

rid of the sand when the nuts were brought to table.

To remedy this a bit of paper was placed on the

nuts, previous to pouring the sand on them, but this

is fatal to success, for on withdrawing so sufficient for

a dish air was admitted to all, thus rendering them

shrivelled. The advantage of the flower-pot system

is that each pot contains enough for a dish. This

receipt for preserving nuts will also apply to walnuts,

but they must first have the green pods taken off and

be well dried, or they will turn mouldy.

STATISTICS.

THE PROPERTY AND INCOME TAX.—A parliamen-

tary return "of the gross amount annually paid on

each of the schedules A, B, C, D, and E, the property

and income tax from 1869 to 1873 inclusive," shows

that the gross annual value of property and

profits assessed to income tax in the year ending the

6th of April, 1873, was as follows:—Schedule A,

155,549,074l.; Schedule B, 59,240,199l.; Schedule C,

40,530,102l.; Schedule D, 238,861,766l. (including

45,247,345l. paid on quarries, mines, railways, etc.,

transferred from Schedule A, per Act 29, Vict. c. 36);

and Schedule E, 29,537,129l.; total, 513,715,315l.

The amount on which duty was paid under Schedule

D in 1872 was 202,906,877l.; in 1871, 189,024,667l.;

and in 1870, 178,578,698l.

MISCELLANEOUS.

It is now perfectly settled that the Empress of

Russia will come over for the Duchess of Edinburgh's

confinement, and proper arrangements are made for

her Majesty's journey.

A Memorial, costing about 1000l., is to be placed

in the Holy Trinity Church, Bournemouth, as a token

of esteem and also in recognition of the great help

given by the late Bishop Sumner in the erection of

the church.

A bunch of black Hamburg grapes was shown the

other day at the Great International Horticultural

Exhibition at Belfast, which weighed 20lbs. 12oz.

This was furnished from Lambton Castle, and ex-

ceeds the weight of Spachly's cluster of Syrian by

about a pound.

The Baroness Burdett-Coutts has presented Mr. H.

M. Stanley with a magnificent dog valued at 500l.,

and he will take the animal and a number of other

dogs sent with him to Africa in the hope that they

will live and return with him. The experiment will

be a very interesting and valuable one.

The marriage of Prince Philippe de Saxe-Cobourg-

Gotha, son of the Princess Clementine d'Orleans,

with the eldest daughter of the King of Belgium, is

fixed to take place at Brussels in the beginning of

November. The bride is only a little over her teens,

and the bridegroom is one of the youngest colonels

in the Austrian army.

The charming portrait of the Princess of Wales,

with one of her little ones on her back, is now great

a favourite that no less than 180,000 copies of it have

been sold. This shows not only the great popularity of

her Royal Highness, which is an acknowledged fact,

but the special interest which attaches to pictures

which represent Royal personages in the easy and

natural life of the home circle.

The Queen stood godmother by proxy to the

two sons of Lord Odo Russell, British Ambassador

to the Court of Berlin, who were christened a few

days ago at Weßmar Abbey, the mother (Lord Odo's

brother, the Duke of Bedford. The infants were

named Victor Alexander Frederick and Alexander

Victor Frederick. The other sponsors were their

Imperial Highnesses the Crown Prince and Prin-

cess of Germany, Lord and Lady Skelmersdale, and

the Earl of Clarendon.

CONTENTS.

Page	Page
THE GIPSY PRINCE; OR, A SLAVE OF CIRCUM- STANCES ... 503	FACTS ... 526
THE SHOKMAKER ... 508	GENS ... 527
CAST ON THE WORLD ... 509	HOUSEHOLD TREASURES ... 527
FIELD, FOREST, AND FLOOD ... 511	STATISTICS ... 527
WAX HORSES ... 511	MISCELLANEOUS ... 527
DID HE PROPOSE? ... 512	
READY-MADE DRESSES ... 513	
SCIENCE ... 513	
THE ART'S BETROTHEN ... 514	
THE SWEET SISTERS OF INCHVARRA; OR, THE VAMPIRE OF THE GUILLANORES ... 514	
WHEN THE SHIP COMES HOME ... 517	
EDITH'S STRATAGEM ... 520	
EXPECTATIONS ... 521	
THE THREADS OF LIFE ... 524	

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

JANE H.—The lines you have sent about "In Memory" have not, we think, sufficient merit for publication: The colour of the hair is dark-brown.

COURTESY E.—Under such circumstances as those to which allusion is made in your letter, a lady's own good sense would be her best guide and counsellor.

J. H. W.—A natural consequence of a reply "not in accordance with your wishes" is that the matter should be allowed to drop.

FLYING SCUR.—If the requests of your friends were written on distinct pieces of paper it would enable us to deal with them in a manner which probably would be more satisfactory to you.

C. S.—A cooper's smith for the navy has no examination to pass that we are aware of. He must of course have served an apprenticeship to a master ordinarily employed in the dockyards where ships of war are constructed.

W. S.—From the tenor of your letter it would appear that your best chance of success in the subject referred to will be found amongst your own circle of acquaintances; there your personnel, about which you have been remarkably reticent, will be most likely to be correctly appreciated.

HARRY Q.—The rule is this:—We do not reply to correspondents in any other manner than through these columns. It is therefore impossible for us to comply with any request of yours which involves a postal communication. Any new advertisement you may think proper to send will in all probability be inserted.

B.—1. It has been said that the liquor in which water-cresses have been boiled is frequently efficacious in the removal of warts. The parafacient must be repeatedly bathed with the liquor. 2. Corn plasters are excellent remedies for corns. They can be purchased at the shops of most chemists. 3. Fumigation. 4. You write a good serviceable hand.

KING DICK.—1. Dandruff is sometimes alleviated by a mixture of glycerine and salad oil carefully dropped into the ear. Sometimes the use of the syringe is necessary. The best plan of all is to have surgical advice on the subject. 2. The income paid to the members of the English Royal Family yearly, and collectively, is about half a million sterling, inclusive of her Majesty's civil list. It should always be remembered that the civil list is not the privy purse, although the latter is included in the former. 3. The handwriting is very good, quite good enough.

H. L. asks.—How wine is made from common English grapes grown in the open air? The following is a recipe:—To every gallon of ripe grapes put a gallon of soft water, use a mash tub, bruise the grapes and let the mixture afterwards stand a week without stirring; then draw the liquor off. To every gallon of wine put three pounds of lump sugar; put the whole into a barrel, but do not bung the barrel till the liquor has done hissing, then bung the barrel close. In six months after this the wine will be fit for bottling. A better wine can be made by diminishing the quantity both of water and sugar, but of course the "yield" will be less.

J. G. S.—Your recent selections seem to have been more fortunate than those we noticed on a previous occasion. The verses entitled "Only a Beggar" and "Woman" are, on the whole, tolerably well written. But the sentiment in which you seem to delight overrates. In the one picture a representation of utter hopelessness is given, and in the other the talk is only about soothing and healing and loving, and so forth. You never seem to think of anything beyond despair, and, like the man in the fable with his cart-wheels stuck in the mud, spend the time in bemoaning which should be given to effort. You should have made your beggar chirrup cheerfully as he tacked up his sleeves to work, and thus have dispelled his gloom.

R. C.—The verses you have sent entitled "Summer and Autumn" will not do. Many of the expressions are quite inapposite. It is incorrect to say that the song of a bird meets the morning's blush. Such a song may be described as welcoming the returning day or as meeting the ear, but a song cannot, we should think, even by poetical licence, meet a blush. It is also incorrect to suggest that the illusions of life remain undetected until all life's sands are run. The collocation, as the French put it, frequently comes long before that period. We have merely given two specimens of the many crudities with which the piece abounds; and for these a not unpleasant pervading conceit does not atone.

KATHLEEN.—Lovers often correspond with each other by means of a signal or cipher. This course dispenses with the intervention of third parties and foils the curiosity which often hovers round a mutual attachment; it is also favourable to the development of the tender passion, which should indeed be openly declared when those interested have made up their minds, but which need not

be crushed in the bud by an improper and hasty interference. You should neither publish the feelings of your heart to the world nor conceal them from a true friend. From all this you may gather that we think your native wit might discover other means of communicating with a true lover than the way suggested by your letter.

AMPHROBIA.—We cannot tell you how to grow taller or how to get thinner or how to remedy the similar peculiarities of which you complain. You should try not to be discontented with the particular form allotted you by nature, and do the best you can with it. To this end use your powers of observation well. Notice those persons that come across your path who are the cleanest, the most industrious, the best tempered, and the most respected by their fellows, and follow their example by making repeated endeavours to acquire their good qualities. Make a friend of such a one if you can. Remember that solitude has its dangers as well as society, and that she who lacks a friend of her own sex lacks a great deal of beneficial influence.

FAIR ANNE OF ENGLAND.—1. The last stage of the history of Ancient Greece occupied about a hundred and fifty years and commenced after the death of Alexander the Great, which happened in 323 B.C. The period was marked by events caused by the rivalries of three of Alexander's generals named Ptolemy, Seleucus and Antigonus. The two former were victorious in the celebrated Battle of Ipsus. These three were the revolts at Athens, the refusal of the Athenians to admit Demetrius within their city, his subsequent conquest of Athens by raising his fleet for blockading purposes and then the accession of Seleucus to greater power after the ignominious death of Demetrius. The successors to Seleucus were very unfortunate, and one of them became involved in a war with the Romans, who were victorious and who soon after took the lead in the civilised world. 2. The word "league" has three different meanings. As a verb it means "to unite on certain terms," as a substantive it signifies both a measure of length containing three miles and a stone that at one time was erected at the end of every league. 3. In a map of the world as known to the ancients you will find, amongst others, the following celebrated places marked on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea: Carthage, Rome, Syracuse, Sidon, Joppa, and Alexandria. Athens is perhaps more correctly described as situated on the *Ægean Sea*.

FAIR ANNE OF ENGLAND.—1. We left the dancers, he and I,
And stood beneath the starry sky;
He spoke my name, in gentle tone,
"Darling, now that we're alone,
Repeat again that promise sweet
While here I'm kneeling at thy feet."

"Many have worshipped at thy shrine,
But none with love as pure as mine.
And wilt thou let thy life's pure light
Be to my life as stars to night?
I stilled my heart's wild, rapturous thrill
And answered simply, "Love! I will!"
We parted. Too happy yet to rest
I watched the moon's bright golden crest
Climb o'er the hill-top, far away,
Making the earth's bright night as day.
And thought how bright the world would be
When he was in all to me."

Two lovers'neath my window passed;
My heart was beating loud and fast,
For in that same low, pleading tone,
He said, "Be mine, and mine alone!"
He kissed her brow, so pure and fair,
Ah, me! what fools we women are!

A CONSTANT READER.—By reason of your marriage, your husband is now bound to maintain your illegitimate child until the child is sixteen or until the death of its mother. Any application therefore to the putative father for maintenance-money during the period since your marriage would not be well founded. But since the alleged father did within the twelve months succeeding the birth of the child pay you money for its maintenance, it is probable that an application to a justice of the peace for an order upon the alleged father for the payment of all arrears due at the date of your marriage would, if supported by evidence, be successful. When the father of the illegitimate child was within twelve months of the child's birth paid money for its maintenance an application for an affiliation order may be made at any subsequent period without limitation in regard to time. Thus much for the legal aspect of the case. When considered in its practical bearing it may be worth while for you to pause before you probe this old sore. From the information your letter contains it appears that you are only entitled to about four years and a half maintenance-money, that being the time which elapsed between the birth of the child and your marriage. The amount for this period at half-a-crown a week is £34 5s. 0d. Of this you have already received £20. So that you contemplate taking much trouble to revive an old and perhaps forgotten scandal, and to endanger the peace of your new and happy home—for what? For the comparatively small sum of £14 5s. 0d. You are not likely to get more and you may get less. However, you may think the money of such great importance that you will resolve to proceed. Be it so. In accordance with your request we have given you a little information on the subject.

LOVELY M.—A certain wizard was once of opinion that a mole on the right side of the neck—such is the subject of your note—should be deemed an unlucky omen to its possessor, for the following reason. Cupid in his early youth, and in waters of the world's history this early youth was spent we need not now stop to inquire, Cupid in these days—which was the days in which he only taught by example and had not learned to transfix a single heart with a single arrow—at that time Cupid, we say, no, the wizard says, Cupid had not only more sweethearts than one but once had the misfortune to have two sweethearts languishing for him at the same time, whose beauty failed to be matchless simply because the one so nearly matched the other that our youthful hero had a difficulty in distinguishing who was whom, but in whose turn it was to be put in the objective case, which in this case means whose turn it was to be the precise object of

his regard at a precise epoch of time. In this dilemma the wizard Venus came to the youth's aid. Unwilling to interfere with the maiden's rivalry, she did not use her power by adding to or taking from the charms of either, but from the stem of a beautiful flower she held in the hand which clasped in a loving embrace the neck of the girl from whom Cupid was at that moment absent, from this stem she caused to exude a tiny drop of moisture, which, drying upon the right side of the neck, left a small red mark that never became obliterated and served as long as the girl lived as a sort of beacon to Cupid to warn or to allure him as the case might be. This legend is the wizard's authority for saying that a mole on the right side of a young lady's neck means that she is "left," that is, forsaken for another who also holds a place in her lover's affections. In his book the wizard goes on to explain how girls with a mole on the right side of the neck usually marry widowers, and how that such girls more than others are from experience able to appreciate the truth of the old song—

"Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever,
One foot in sea and one on shore,
To one thing constant never!"

LOVE, eighteen, rather tall, very loving, good looking, rather dark complexion and light hair. Respondent must be young and steady.

HARRIET, twenty, tall and dark, would like to correspond with a tall, fair gentleman, a captain in the army preferred.

FLORENCE, eighteen, tall, fair and well educated, would like to correspond with a tall, dark gentleman, a lieutenant in the navy preferred.

WILLIAM S., a mechanic, wishes to correspond with a handsome young girl about eighteen, who is fond of music, and domesticated.

LOVELY HARRY, eighteen, 5ft. 5in., and fair, would like to correspond with a loving young woman about his own age who will have a little money, and would make a loving wife; a tradesman's daughter preferred.

LILLIAN, eighteen, medium height, dark hair and eyes, would like to correspond with a gentleman about twenty; he must be tall, tolerably good looking, and fond of home.

VIOLET wishes to correspond with a sailor; a mate preferred. She is eighteen, about the middle height, has brown hair, fair complexion and wicked blue eyes, is very lively and good tempered.

G. E. C., a bookkeeper, possessing an annual salary of 1,000 dollars, would like to correspond with a respectable young lady of handsome appearance, of about seventeen or eighteen summers; objects—marriage.

SARAH, twenty, medium height, nut-brown hair, rather fair, blue eyes, fond of music, singing and home. Respondent must be fair, have a good trade and be fond of home.

THYRINDER, twenty-four, tall, fair complexioned, considered good looking, has an income of £300 per annum with other prospects, would like to correspond with a dark complexioned, good looking young lady about the same age or under, with a good education.

EMMA, twenty-one, wishes to correspond with a nice steady young man about twenty-four, who is in good circumstances. "Neither" wishes to marry as soon as she can. She is fair, very tall, loving, fond of children and could make a comfortable home.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:
M. J. is responded to by—"Jenny," twenty-one, and a machinist.

GWENDA by—"Arnold," thirty, established in business, good prospects, dark, and not bad looking.

JAMIE by—"E. A. M., " tall, rather fair, domesticated, and thinks she would just suit him.

FLAS JACK by—"Dorcas," who is tall, dark, fond of home, a teetotaler, very domesticated, and thinks she could make a home good wife.

MANHOOT by—"J. H. H., " thirty-three, rather tall, a furrier's warehouseman, fair position, steady, industrious and respectfully connected.

J. H. W. by—"A. E. P., " twenty-three, medium height, brown hair and eyes, can make and wash a shirt, and cook a good plain dinner. "A. E. P." is wishing to find some one to love her faithfully and truly.

J. B. by—"Joe," seventeen, dark blue eyes, dark curly hair and eyebrows, considered handsome, good tempered, likes life, but still is fond of home, is an excellent player on the piano-forte.

WILL F. S. by—"Lily," eighteen, blue eyes, golden hair, very fair complexion, handsome, good tempered, has many admirers, but cares for none, is an excellent player on the harp, and thinks she and "W. F. S." would agree.

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